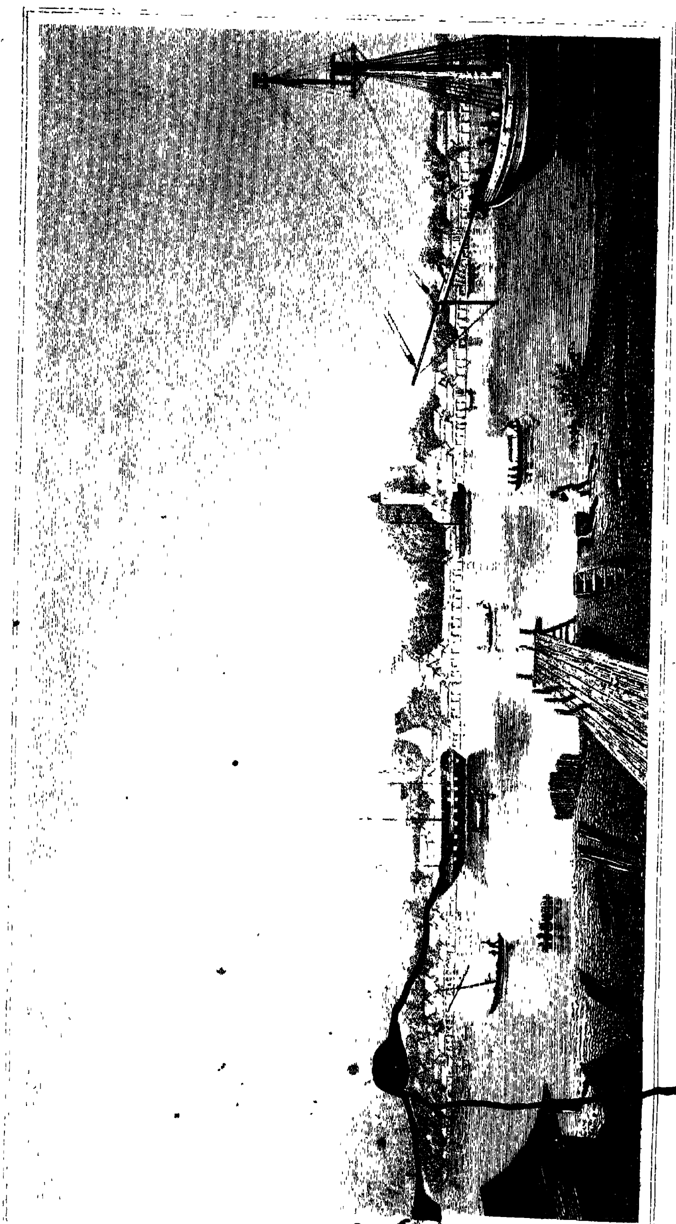


THE MISSION TO SIAM, AND HUÉ THE CAPITAL OF COCHIN CHINA, IN THE YEARS 1821—2.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF

THE LATE GEORGE FINLAYSON, Esq.

ASSISTANT SURGEON OF HIS MAJESTY'S 8TH LIGHT DRAGOONS,

SURGEON AND NATURALIST TO THE MISSION

WITH A

MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

SIR THOMAS STAMFORD RAFFLES, F.R.S.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

MDCCCXXVI.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland-court.

DEDICATED

(BY PERMISSION)

TO THE

HONOURABLE THE COURT OF DIRECTORS

OF

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY;

THROUGH WHOSE LIBERALITY THE MISSION WAS PROVIDED WITH THE MEANS OF PROSECUTING OBJECTS OF SCIENCE,

BY THEIR MOST OBEDIENT

HUMBLE SERVANT,

THOMAS STAMFORD RAFFLES.

INTRODUCTION.

In the year 1821, a mission was sent by the Governor-General of Bengal to the courts of Siam and Cochin-China, having for its object the opening of a friendly intercourse between those countries and the British possessions, and the establishment of free trade on both sides.

This mission it is well known was not attended with the success expected; little or no positive advantage was gained to our trade, but the foundation of a friendly intercourse was laid by the visit, and the knowledge procured may prepare the way for a future attempt under more favourable circumstances.

It at any rate afforded an opportunity for our obtaining much valuable information respecting countries and people, hitherto almost unknown to us, and in this respect the particulars contained in the following pages may be deemed of sufficient interest to justify their publication: they are transcribed nearly verbatim from the

private journal of the late Mr. George Finlayson, who was attached to the Mission as Surgeon and naturalist, but who, unfortunately for his friends and the cause of science, fell a sacrifice to his unwearied exertions in the performance of the service intrusted to him, and did not live to revise and arrange them himself, having died on his passage to England.

The Journal in its unfinished and rough state, with the whole of the valuable collections in natural history made by Mr. Finlayson during the course of the Mission, having been deposited in the museum of the East India company, and by the liberal arrangements of the court of directors, laid open to the inspection of those who were interested in the subject, it is now published, with the permission of Dr. Somerville, and in the simplest form practicable, it being considered that such a work can have no better recommendation than the certainty of its genuineness and authenticity.

It does not profess to afford any account of the official proceedings or conduct of the Mission, further than met the author's observation as a spectator in common with others who were present on the occasion; its object is to throw light on the country, and on the character, institutions, and habits of the people generally.

It would have been easy to have enlarged the

work by the addition of notes and explanatory remarks, and at one time it was proposed to have annexed an appendix with plates, illustrative of the subjects in natural history collected during the voyage, for which the materials are considerable; but the publisher having objected to the increased expense that would in this case have been incurred, the plan was abandoned.

Partly also on this account, but more especially in consequence of its being understood that Mr. Crawfurd, to whom the charge of the Mission was intrusted, himself meditates a work on the subject, and as it would be treading on ground more peculiarly belonging to that gentleman, it has been deemed advisable not to enlarge, in this place, on the public objects and results of the Mission, or to enter into any general review of the state of the countries visited, or of the various interests involved, which might otherwise have been expected.

It is necessary however to say a few words respecting the lamented author.

George Finlayson was a native of Thurso, in Scotland, descended from parents in a very humble sphere of life, but most respectable in their station. He had two brothers who, like himself, died early in the career of prosperity. The circumstances under which Donald, the

eldest, and subsequently George, were brought forward, were as follows :—

During the late war, when the charge of the medical department of the army in Scotland was committed to Dr. Somerville, he had occasion for the assistance of a clerk, the nature of whose duties made it desirable that he should have some knowledge of medicine, and it occurred to him that the salary of the office might furnish the means to some meritorious person of prosecuting his studies at the same time. In order to find such a person he addressed himself to Dr. Thomson, professor of surgery in the University of Edinburgh, well knowing the competence of his judgment, and his disinterested zeal in advancing modest merit; Dr. Thomson immediately named a young man who fulfilled every condition, and whose slender means arose from hours of private tuition. Donald Finlayson was accordingly sent and appointed. Assiduity in the discharge of every duty, blended with an earnest desire to please, were striking parts of his character. He was a good Greek, Latin, and French scholar, and an excellent botanist, besides being a good anatomist, and well versed in other branches of medical science. He showed an ardour in acquiring information on every subject which excited an interest in those from whom

he sought it. He had enjoyed fewer opportunities of acquiring a knowledge of the world than of most subjects, and was conscious of the awkwardness resulting from this deficiency, and most anxious to remove the cause of it, in which his success was only to be explained by the thankfulness with which he received a hint upon the subject.

On completing the course of his academical studies, Dr. Somerville thought him equal to a higher situation, and advised him to go into the army, assuring him that he had been so satisfied with his services, that he should be glad if he had a brother that he might appoint to be his successor. He said his brother George, whom he had taken great pains to educate, was in every respect a more able man than he was, and therefore strongly recommended him.

George was accordingly appointed to the situation. He in every respect verified the account of his partial friend; and became so great a favourite, that he was a constant inmate in Dr. Somerville's family, and beloved by all who knew him. When his studies were finished, Dr. Somerville sent him also into the army, and it was no less gratifying to the generous feelings of that gentleman, than creditable to his discernment, to learn, that both brothers distinguished themselves by their attention to their duty and

their humanity to the sick and wounded. Donald had been actively employed in the harassing engagements that preceded the battle of Waterloo, as assistant-surgeon of the 33d regiment, and also on that memorable day. On the march to Paris with his regiment, he disappeared, and it seems probable that he fell a victim to marauders then abounding in the country, from the disorganized state of the retreating army. George got leave of absence to endeavour to learn the fate of his unfortunate brother, but his efforts were unavailing as he could only hear that he had been seen exploring a cave near St. Quinten. He was so affected by this severe loss of a brother to whom he owed so much, that it was an act of humanity to get him removed from the scene of his sorrows. Sir James Macgregor, who is never wanting on such occasions, kindly and promptly acceded to Dr. Somerville's request to attach George Finlayson to the medical-staff about to proceed to Ceylon, under the direction of Dr. Farrel, than whom no one was more capable of discerning and appreciating his worth and talents.

In Ceylon Mr. Finlayson was indefatigable in the pursuit of botany and other branches of natural history, to which he devoted all the time that his laborious professional duties allowed. After a residence of some years in this island,

he was removed to Bengal, having been appointed assistant-surgeon of His Majesty's 8th regiment of Light Dragoons, by the kindness of Sir James. He rejoiced to find that his regiment was doing duty near the Himalayan Mountains, as his journey would afford him an opportunity of exploring such an extent of new ground; while his residence there held out every temptation that could fascinate a mind ardent in the pursuit of natural history.

The following extract from a letter written by him to his friend and patron, Dr. Somerville, on his quitting Ceylon, explains his circumstances and prospects at that period, and throws some light on his general character and feeling.

Kandy, 6*th July*, 1819.

I HAVE heard of my being appointed assistant-surgeon to the 8th Dragoons. . . . I have received a very polite note from the director-general on the subject, to whom I am very grateful for the appointment. I could not help entertaining apprehensions lest I should revert to the rank of hospital assistant, and if I have not done so, I am persuaded it is through the representations and intercessions of yourself and Mr. Reid. I have had much reason to be satisfied with my situation in this island, and it is not without regret that I shall leave it. Through the kindness of Dr. Favell, my situation and duties have always been such as to render me perfectly contented. I have not been inattentive to your advice on

a former occasion, and already, through the good management of my friends, I find myself possessed of several hundred pounds, a sum much beyond my expectations. I doubt, therefore, if my circumstances will be benefited by removing to India, where, though the pay is much greater, the mode of living is more expensive, and as second assistant I cannot expect to have the charge of the sick. However, there are other circumstances attending the change, which are of a pleasing nature. My regiment is stationed at Merut, on the frontier of the upper provinces of the Bengal Government, so that from Calcutta I shall have a journey of several thousand miles to perform, a circumstance which of itself would outweigh a host of difficulties. I am delighted with the prospect of seeing so large a portion of the globe; the journey cannot but prove interesting and, I hope, useful to me.

On the return of his regiment to Europe, he was detained for the purpose of attending the Mission to Siam and Cochin China, as medical officer and naturalist, during which his health was sacrificed at an early period by the active and severe exertions which his zeal in the pursuit of natural history induced him to make, and he lived but to reach Bengal, and embark for Europe with little or no hope of recovery. It has been already mentioned that he died on the passage home.

The following extracts from some of his later letters to Dr. Somerville will not be read without interest.

Siam, 15th June, 1822.

NEARLY three months have elapsed since we arrived at this place, Bankok, the capital of Siam, and being unable to get our ship over the bar of the river, we shall probably remain as much longer. I have had but little opportunity to do any thing in any branch of natural history. The people have kept a strict watch over our actions, and their jealousy opposes an insuperable barrier to researches of that nature. We have gained some information respecting the manners of the people, their religion, &c., which may one day afford you some amusement.

* * * By-the-by, what do you think of my furnishing a rapid and popular sketch of our voyage to this place and to Cochin China? Is a production of this sort calculated to excite any interest at the present time? Probably not, after all you have had of late respecting the embassy to China and the shipwreck of the Alceste. * * * I am not at all ambitious of becoming author, and my reason for saying this much is to know your inclinations, by which I would be guided rather than by my own.

I do not know that the political or commercial objects of our mission are of that importance to attract any share of your attention or curiosity. One might with justice say of the king of Siam, what Voltaire says of a certain king of Babylon. "Il se croit le plus grand roi de la terre, parceque tout le monde le lui dit." The celestial empire itself is but a small matter compared to his kingdom. Judge then of the notions such a personage is likely to entertain of our nation.

Our Mission, there seems great reason to fear, is des-

tined to share the fate of the numerous attempts which have already been made to establish a friendly and commercial intercourse with the ultra-Gangetic nations. It does not appear likely that it will effect any thing for the benefit of our commerce. When we arrived in the country we were quite ignorant of many matters, a knowledge of which would have been of the first importance in conducting affairs with such a people. Peace, for which they are more indebted to the weakness and pusillanimity of their enemies than to their own strength, had left the king, and one or two of his ministers, leisure to embark in commercial speculations. You are aware that the king is here the merchant, and almost the only one.

The success of their first attempts exceeded their expectations, and led them to think of increasing the produce of the country. Chinese emigrants were, with this view, encouraged, beyond all former example, and at this moment, they are thought to equal the natives of the country, in number. The effect was instantaneous. The produce of sugar alone, which was before totally neglected, has increased to an astonishing extent, in the course of the last ten years. It is the same with other articles of commerce, as pepper, cardamums, &c.

Not content with trading to China, the Government now wishes to see the ships of Europeans within its ports; one party in the state (that which conducts the commerce of the country) would willingly favour the trade with the latter; but another, and by far the most respectable among the King's advisers, are averse to making any alterations in established usages, though not displeased to see their country visited by European ships. As they stand at present, the regulations relating to commerce with Europeans are almost prohibitory.

It were perhaps useless to say through what causes our Mission has failed, for indeed it may be said to have done so already: I do not know that we can expect a much better reception at the court of Cochin China, to which we proceed as soon as we can leave this. As diplomatic matters have hitherto gone in this part of the world, it will perhaps be well if we come off without insult or something worse.

Off the Hooghly, Dec. 25th, 1822.

We are thus far on our return to Bengal, after an absence of more than thirteen months. I return with collections in natural history which will not, I think, disappoint the Supreme Government. I have seen much, and many interesting tribes of people; I have been much gratified; but my health is destroyed, I fear, for ever. Both my lungs and liver are in fault; I have exposed myself too much to the weather; but for my health, I had been the happiest man alive. The next two months will decide whether I shall recover or not; our cold weather is just set in, and may do me good. This is the first time I have put pen to paper for months, therefore do not expect much. I cannot say that we have gained much by negotiation; the Siamese and Cochin Chinese are a very proud people. The King of Siam gave the Mission an audience, but the King of Cochin China, contrary to the custom of his predecessors, would not receive the Envoy of the Governor-General of Bengal. It was the practice of his court, he observed, to grant audiences to the ambassadors of kings only, and that the Governor-General must address himself to his Minister. The business of the Mission was transacted with the

latter. Cochin China offers to the traveller a most extraordinary spectacle; the capital, Hué, is surrounded by fortifications that would do credit to the first fortress in Europe. I have kept a journal of events, and it is of some extent; I hope it will serve to amuse my friends for an idle hour or two. If the public have any curiosity respecting the countries we have lately visited, I should not care to lay it before that awful tribunal, provided, however, that the work would gain me some little credit. In this, however, I should be guided by your opinion, and that of your friends. I have a great horror of appearing before the public, but something not altogether uninteresting in the form of a book would be of service to me in this country, where if I get forward, it must be by my own exertions. I should be very happy to hear from you on this subject, if you think it deserves the least consideration.

Mr. Crawfurd means to write a book. * * * His opinion of things differs considerably from mine, for I was in fact but a mere spectator.

I have discovered some splendid new plants. What would Mr. Brown say to a plant of the Orchideous tribe, an ærides, as far as I have yet discovered, that should have a flowering spike six feet high, covered with upwards of one hundred flowers, each some inches across*? There is not a more splendid object in vegetable nature;

* Ærides. Scapo simplici, foliis a radice arcte imbricatis, distichis tripedalibus, frondi similibus; foliolis ensiformibus, longissimis: floribus spicatis, alternis punctatis, magnis, speciosis; labello subcylindrico, tripartito, laminâ inferiore patente, trifida, acuminata integra, laminis superioribus in arcum supra pistillum conniventibus.

The flowers diffuse the richest fragrance, the petals are waved on the margin, of a fleshy consistence, of a dark yellow colour,

if less singular, it is perhaps equally deserving of admiration with the Rafflesia, which he has described in his usual classical style. I shall have a good many plants to send home, as well as birds and quadrupeds.

Calcutta, June 15*th*, 1823.

DR. F. advises me strongly to continue in India; I see no plan so good, if my health will admit, yet I will not continue a useless burden on a Government which I have found so liberal, and if a few months' experience do not bring me about, I will give up all prospects and wait the too tedious issue of such complaints.

I have reason to fear that I have got confirmed phthisis; if I recover, my prospects will brighten: even under the worst circumstances, we may prepare for better times. If I remain, it will be greatly to my advantage to be transferred to the Company's medical service. It is nothing entering the lists with boys again.

Calcutta, June 16*th*.

MY health has not improved since my arrival, and as if ill health were not of itself sufficient grievance, it is, I fear, destined to entail upon me the disappointment of very fair hopes. Notwithstanding the frequent interruption to my labours by ill health, the present Governor-General, Mr. Adam, has expressed himself very favourably of my exertions, and very willing to do something for me. Indeed, I am assured on very good authority,

interspersed with iron-brown spots. The pistillum is similarly dotted; the labellum internally striated, trifid, and villous at the apex. The spike of the plant discovered contained more than one hundred flowers, the greater number of them fully expanded, each several inches in length, and as much in breadth.—*Extract from Mr. Finlayson's Botanical Journal.*

that he would immediately put me in possession of a most elegible appointment, just vacated by a friend of mine, if my health would admit of my entering upon its duties. It would be preposterous in me to expect that Government would keep this open for me. In this employment I should have been placed under the immediate control of Government, and should have no less a field than the Himalaya range for my research.

I fear I have been rather troublesome to you with my letters of late, this being the third within a very short time.

My object in writing this is to inform you that in the course of a month or so I shall be on my way to England. I have come to this resolution in consequence of my bad state of health, in which no improvement has taken place since my arrival here: if I have not yet got a confirmed phthisis, the voyage may set me up, but if I have, I shall wait my fate in some retired corner or other at home. I shall leave behind me some very worthy friends who have always been forward in promoting my interest, and although my regiment has gone home, I could at this moment get an appointment from Government, if my health would allow me to accept it. I have, however, determined to sacrifice every thing for the recovery of my health, feeling pretty well assured that with that I shall get through the world some how or other.

My kindest and affectionate regards to you all.

It is due to Lord Amherst to mention that on his Lordship's appointment to the Government of India, Dr. Somerville made known to him the acquirements of Mr. Finlayson, distinctly

explaining that his object was not to solicit favour, but to mention that it might be a subject of regret that a person so eminently qualified by his knowledge in natural history should return to Europe with his regiment, while his abilities might be so usefully exerted in India. Lord Amherst said that it was the only application of the kind that had been made to him; he saw it in its true light, and immediately made a memorandum of the circumstance, with an assurance that he should not fail to take care of so deserving a person; and it is certain that his Lordship would have done justice to his merits, had his life been spared. But his constitution was worn out by his indefatigable exertions in those ungenial climates in which it was his lot to serve. Even before the arrival of Lord Amherst, a lucrative and honourable employment well suited to his habits and studies was offered to him by Mr. Adam, but the disease which terminated his life had already made too much progress to admit of his availing himself of the proffered patronage.

In speaking of the character of the two brothers, Dr. Somerville thus expresses himself:—

"I have seldom met with any young men more strongly impressed with the sense of

rectitude than Donald and George Finlayson; their conduct was in every case regulated by a feeling of duty, and a desire to be useful to all around them, to which it would be superfluous to add how much they were esteemed, and how sincerely their premature death has been regretted."

In reflecting on this short biographical sketch, the mind cannot fail to dwell on the bright example which it affords, that knowledge and independence are within the reach of all who will labour for them, whatever be their condition or rank in life, and that the best and only solid foundation of prosperity and esteem, is a steady adherence to the principle of rectitude.

Nothing can be more creditable than the exertions made by the father to gratify the thirst for education and knowledge evinced by his sons, unless it be exceeded by the generous and disinterested friendship of the patron. But both would have been unavailing had not the young men themselves been indefatigable in their exertions, and religiously upright and steady in their principles, conduct, and views.

Though Finlayson may not rank with a Burns, or a Leyden, in point of talent, still it is hoped there is enough in his story and writings to excite interest and attention; and

that while his name may be enrolled in the long and melancholy list of those who have in early life fallen a sacrifice to their zeal and exertions in the cause of science, it may add another link to the chain which binds our affections and attachment to a land where the avenues to it are open to all, and the patronage and encouragement to worth and talent are daily advancing with the facilities of education and improvement. Let it, however, be recollected that the foundation of the education of the Finlaysons (for they were in other respects nearly self-taught) was laid at home, under the parent's eye, not in schools, nor in the knowledge of the world, but on the broad and obvious principles of religion and morality,—as simple as they are sacred,—instilled into their youthful minds with their earliest recollections, and confirmed by the pastor's authority and blessing, according to the practice in Scotland. This foundation was equal to any superstructure, and on it, as on a rock of adamant, they built their *hopes*, their fortunes, and their happiness,—and their reward was a feeling of content and gratitude for the unexpected benefits they enjoyed, and the esteem and respect of all who knew them.

The following observations collected from

the author's loose memoranda were probably intended by him as the outline of an introduction to the publication which he projected, and may be advantageously introduced in this place as a preface to the Journal. They will shew his turn of mind, and the objects he had in view.

In a greater or less degree, there is, perhaps, inherent in the minds of most men, a desire to visit foreign countries,—a desire which neither storms nor tempests, deserts, wilds, nor precipices, with all their appalling fears, have been able to counteract or to check. Cast naked and helpless on this earth, man has aspired to scan its limits, to ascertain its bounds, and even to scrutinize its nature: he has risen superior to the contending elements, which might seem to have opposed an insuperable barrier to his restless ambition, to his ever-active, never-satisfied curiosity; and even the great globe itself no longer seems to offer a theatre too great or too extensive for the exertion of his activity.

Insatiable ambition, boundless curiosity, are to be reckoned among the more prominent of the attributes with which man is endowed. To what mighty ends have they not led? If they have brought upon him, and upon the race, unnumbered evils, they have also had their attendant good. His share of peace, perhaps of happiness, had been greater had he indulged these propensities less; but it is not in his power to resist the unalterable impulse, conferred upon him, doubtless, for the best of purposes. The *curiosity* that is gratified with inquiring into the laws implanted in organized beings, or into the general phenomena which characterize the

material world at large, admits of, and is usually attended by gratification as permanent as it is unmixed; every step is attended with unalloyed pleasure, every new acquisition leads and stimulates to further discovery.

This disposition of the mind is particularly observable in those who have made nature and natural objects their study. Hence the eagerness with which men engage in them: no one capable of reflection but has at one time or other experienced this laudable curiosity, and wished for the power to gratify it. To this source we must refer the encouragement held forth in the present day to voyagers and travellers, and in general to every one engaged in matters of discovery. It is not extraordinary, therefore, that persons should readily be found eager to enter upon the investigation of new and distant countries, and of the various objects of knowledge which they contain. It is the lot of few to indulge their inclinations this way; and of these few, how scanty is the proportion of individuals qualified for the important task, either by original endowment, by previous pursuits and habits, or by the necessary education, or by a proper train and temper of mind! Fortunately, however, the objects of pursuit are as numerous as the taste of man is various, and something is left even to the most humble intentions. A proper consideration of this matter would lead to the most important acquirements both on the part of the most humbly endowed, and for the benefit of science and knowledge in general. The principle need not be enforced by argument: let us follow it, if possible, with alacrity, and make the most of the opportunities which fall in our way. Let us devote to the task those abilities, however moderate, with which the Almighty has endowed us, and we shall rarely fail altogether of

deriving benefit from our exertions. We may rest secure that the labours so bestowed will seldom fail to be duly appreciated; that our observations will be received with candour, and our arguments, if urged with modesty, will rarely fail to be listened to by the circle of our friends and acquaintances, to the approbation of whom no one can be altogether indifferent. It is in this temper of mind that we may hope to avoid a two-fold evil; that of exaggerating the importance of the feeble exertions of an individual on the one hand, and of thinking too meanly of his capacity on the other,—since both are alike hurtful, and alike oppose the acquisition of useful knowledge.

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A JOURNAL

OF

THE VOYAGE OF THE MISSION

FROM

BENGAL TO SIAM AND COCHIN CHINA.

IN THE YEARS 1821-2.

CHAPTER I.

VOYAGE FROM CALCUTTA TO PRINCE OF WALES' ISLAND.—ISLANDS OF PREPARIS, NARCONDAM, SEYER, AND PRINCE OF WALES.

ON the 21st November we embarked on the John Adam, nearly opposite to Fort William, and dropped gradually down the river to the sand-heads. We had but one opportunity of going on shore, and this was at some distance above Sauger Island. The land was here eight or ten feet above high-water mark; soil, a very deep, black, light mould, and densely covered with low jungle. Numerous traces of deer, and one very conspicuous track of a tiger, which appeared to have been of enormous size. Carried off a species of Boletus, a species of Laurus, and one of Calamus.

The pilot left us, in smooth water, near to a

moored ship allotted for the reception of pilots, and out of sight of land. On the following morning we sailed, with a fair and tolerably strong wind, attended with a sea sufficiently rough to occasion sickness in persons so little accustomed to this dread element. In this manner we arrived off Cape Negrais. While off this point, but still far from being within sight, our ship was visited by two or three birds, one a species of dove, the next another of the Linnean Passeres, and a third a species of Sterna. The latter, as usually happens with others of the same family, either from natural stupidity or from exhaustion, allowed itself to be taken without difficulty.

December 3.—Early in the morning, the island of Preparis, the first land we had yet seen since we left the pilot, was in sight. We stood towards it with the view of landing upon it, and examining its structure; but the wind unfortunately increasing, and the windward coast being only navigable with safety with the ship, it was deemed too hazardous a task to land.

From the distance at which we viewed these islands, it was difficult to form an accurate judgment respecting their structure. The two small ones, called the Cow and Calf, at one time appeared as if they were of basaltic formation; and again as if they were merely banks of coral.

Against the latter supposition, their altitude above the sea (not less perhaps than two hundred feet) might seem to militate; but this is not conclusive, especially if there be any truth in the observation, that the great basin which composes this ocean has lost much of its original altitude. It is possible that they may be composed both of basalt and coral; it is highly probable that one or other of these materials constitute their mass, and most probably the latter. The principal island is of a gently undulating shape, rising gradually from the sea, to a slight elevation, and is thickly covered with wood, and apparently tall and wide-spreading trees.

We had the more reason to regret the circumstance of our not being able to land on these islands, from their being the first in the great chain which composes the archipelago.

On the following morning at sun-rise we were within sight of Narcondam, an island apparently several miles in diameter, in form and shape a perfect specimen of the volcanic cone, which we calculated to be about two thousand five hundred feet above the sea. We were at too great a distance to entertain a hope of landing on it. This island, from its height, its solitary xeistence in a wide sea, and its singular and beautiful form, constitutes a very striking object.

On this occasion we endeavoured to construct

an instrument for ascertaining the temperature of the sea at considerable depths, but from the imperfection of our materials, our success was but indifferent. In the only experiment that we performed, the temperature at two hundred and forty feet was 2½° less than at the surface.

The variations on the barometric column we observed to be very regular, being at its greatest height about seven a.m., and lowest towards four p.m.

The weather continued agreeable; the wind steady and moderate, the N.E. monsoon having now set in steadily. Several of the natives on board had been ailing; and one, a sepoy, had a dangerous attack of cholera, but all were now sufficiently in health.

Our course now lay towards the coast, of which we soon came within sight. As we approached the western coast of this peninsula, we could not fail to be struck with the singular appearance of numerous islands, varying in dimensions, situation, and height; an appearance very different from what is observable on the opposite side of this bay, where scarce an island rises a few feet above the water, but which here being strewed over so great a space, seem to form a bulwark, or chain of protection to the continental land.

The bold and elevated ridge in the centre,

with the abrupt and rugged points on their flanks, were no less striking, and appeared, even at a distance, to afford ample evidence of their primitive structure. The more elevated mountain ridges on the continent were not less bold or striking in their appearance. The general direction of these ridges, both in the islands and on the continent, is nearly north and south, inclining a little from west to east. Vegetation appears everywhere abundant; the forms principally arborescent.

On the 7th of December, being near to the Seyer Islands, in latitude 8° 43′ N., and longitude 97° 48′ E., we prepared to land on them. These islands are within sight of the continent, and distant from it about twenty-eight miles. The principal one appears to be about five miles in length, and perhaps one in breadth. It was on this that we proposed to land. As we approached in the boat, we were struck with the general silence which seemed to pervade it, a circumstance which appeared to us the more singular, as it was everywhere covered with dense woods, which might be supposed to afford nourishment and safe shelter to numerous land birds, while its rocky coast might have been alike favourable to the existence of water fowl. Scarce a bird, however, was seen to hover over the place. Neither the varied forms of an exu-

berant vegetation, nor the safe asylum under its peaceful shade, seemed sufficient to attract even a scanty portion of animated nature to this apparently favourable, and certainly very beautiful, spot. Is the proximity of man necessary to give to rude nature an aspect or an impulse favourable for the support of animated creation in its various forms? On this desert island, the tall trees seemed to wave their tops in vain; the more humble shrub and herb flowered unseen, their sweets apparently unappreciated. The useful and friendly palm, the luscious plantain-tree, the scented jasmine, the elegant bamboo, the nutritious yam, were here the spontaneous production of the soil; beautiful at least, and interesting in appearance, though not highly possessed of those valuable qualities, which in a domestic state man has conferred upon them by his care and industry.

As we approached the shore, we were enabled to notice the elevated and nearly perpendicular direction of the rocky mass, which, on more close inspection, was found to be composed of coarse-grained granite, for the most part of a reddish colour; but occasionally of a flesh red, and more often of a gray colour. A well defined, broad, and very white stripe, extending along the whole length of the island, a few feet above the sea, appeared to form the high-water mark. This

white appearance was occasioned by a shelly incrustation.

The appearance of the rocks was, in general, very uniform. They were, as already observed, altogether granitic. The inclination of the strata was from N.E. to S.W. Though the character of this granite was extremely well defined and prominent, it yet appeared a difficult task to pronounce an opinion respecting its stratification. In one part might be seen large, perfectly homogeneous masses, fifty or sixty feet in thickness, without rent, fissure, or division, without the slightest appearance of stratification; with the solitary exception of the occasional occurrence of a seam or narrow vein of quartz, or of finer-grained granite, crossing its surface. But by far the most common appearance in this granite, was that of a tolerably uniform stratification, the strata of unequal thickness, and crossing the direction of the mountain ridge at an acute angle. These strata were again irregularly divided in most parts, so that the whole seemed to have a double stratification, or to be divided into irregular trapeziums. The granite was almost universally coarse-grained, containing chiefly quartz and feldspar, with but little mica; the crystals of feldspar varied in size from a grain to nearly an inch. This coarse-grained granite occasionally passed into one of very fine

structure, and here and there into gneiss, though the latter was always of small extent. The rock was for the most part divided into numerous sharp and needle-shaped points. Though on a lee shore, there was here a considerable surf and swell, to impede our landing. A solitary water-fowl was seen to wander from rock to rock, collecting food from the pools, which abounded with small fish. After a little care, we landed in safety on the rocks. We observed a considerable variety of corals, crabs, and shells. Of the genus Patella, some species were uncommonly large. Distracted with the multitude of different objects before us, rocks, crustacea, vegetables, &c., we turned from the sea-shore, and entered the forest. We had now reached the region most favourable for the production of palms, the most interesting, the most useful, the most singular of vegetable forms. We required no better proof of an intertropical climate. Three different species were already within our view; and the plants having an affinity to this family were not less numerous. The former were Borassus flabelliformis, Caryota urens, Phœnix farinifera. Of the latter, two species of Pandanus, (odorat. and lævis,) and of Calamus two species, were abundant. The number of plants which we observed within a small space was indeed uncommonly great. The ascent from the sea was every-

where remarkably steep and rugged; disintegrated granite, on the slope of the hills, readily yielded to the pressure of the foot; the forest was, besides, so close, as to be scarce penetrable. After we had proceeded some way through it, our notice was attracted by the chirping of numerous animals. We discovered this to proceed from a multitude of large bats, Pteropus edulis, suspended from a flowering specimen of Borassus. We brought down four of them.

Our exertions in penetrating the woods were necessarily great; the heat was excessive. In a few hours we became somewhat tired, and returned to our boat, highly gratified at the result of our excursion. To have fully investigated the botany of this little island alone, would have required not less than the period of a week. From the difficulty we experienced in getting into our boat again, the plants we had collected were nearly altogether lost; they were unfortunately tossed about in the sea for some time, and thus rendered almost useless.

On returning to the ship, we found that the captain had visited the small island opposite to us during our absence. He had not been less entertained. The confinement of a ship necessarily renders the approach of land agreeable; hence we are always delighted to set foot on shore after having been some time at sea. He landed

on a sandy beach; the rocks were of similar structure to those of the larger island, but the vegetable forms were considerably different, a circumstance to be accounted for, perhaps, by his having landed on an opposite and less exposed coast. In intertropical climates, the effect of the different monsoons, even within a very narrow and circumscribed space, is very remarkable, particularly where, as in this instance, there is, as it were, a natural bulwark thrown up to shelter the respective aspects.

We continued to sail during the night with a gentle wind along the coast of Siam. In the morning, a native of Siam and a Malay were brought on board with fish from a canoe. The coast was still bold, and in many parts rocky, with very deep water. Ridges of hills, with intervening valleys and ravines, stretch in the direction of the peninsula. Vegetation appeared everywhere unbounded. A few miles to the north of the Straits of Papra, a somewhat flat table-land, many miles in extent, divides the mountains from the coast; at this place we again landed, at a rocky point, in the middle of an extensive sandy beach.

Here, as on the island, granite was alike abundant, forming mountain masses and rocky eminences: structure very similar to the former; strata more inclined from west to east; red va-

riety of granite less frequent; now gray predominant. Here and there veins of sienite? but of small extent; also small veins of perhaps primitive trap, masses of quartz, with schorl and talc imbedded.

Palms here also of spontaneous growth. Elate silvestris and Borassus caudata of Loureiro were here common. Bambus verticillata, Scævola lobelia, a large, herbaceous plant, with fleshy leaves, not milky and singular from the lateral form of its flower; also Euphorbia, Melastoma, a Syngenesious, and a singular Papilionaceous plant, common on the shore; Convolvulus pes capræ, Jasminum, and Justicia. Thick, dense forest, without any trace of contiguous cultivation. A tall, slender tree, growing to the height of forty feet and upwards, possessing much of the habit and general appearance of a pine, is found lining the sea-beach, disposed in a continued line, with the greatest regularity, and nearly at equal intervals. It here thrives well, and, from its extreme regularity, gives to the scene the appearance of a plantation. It affords shelter and protection from the sea-air to the other vegetable forms. We discovered in this forest a solitary bird of the genus Motacilla. Tracts of the wild elephant were not uncommon, and the recent footsteps of a tiger were imprinted in the sand. Some natives who, from a distance, observed us

to land, kept hovering near, but would not come within speaking distance. We now returned to the ship, and a strong breeze springing up, we were soon carried beyond the Straits of Papra and the island of Junkseylon or Salong. The wind soon increased to a strong breeze, which compelled us to keep some distance from the islands. On the 9th and 10th, we observed from time to time the bold mountains of this coast. These mountains were still distributed into ridges, and still loftier than those we had hitherto seen. The hill, or rather mountain of Queda, was observed at a very great distance. The hill of Penang came next into view; we slowly approached this island, pleased with the great beauty of its undulating scenery. The approach to it, through a narrow channel of deep water, is somewhat tedious, and the tides are, for the most part, strong. The moon shone bright, and our ship was thereby enabled to proceed during the night without a pilot.

11*th*.—In the morning of this day we anchored in the harbour, about 300 yards from the beach. We found here a considerable number of ships of various descriptions and nations: English, American, Chinese junks, Siamese and Arab. We received a polite invitation from the governor, W. E. Phillips, Esq., to reside with him during our stay on the island. We landed in

the course of the day, and proceeded to the governor's country-seat, three or four miles from the town, and were received in the most hospitable manner by him and his family. The population of this island consists chiefly of foreigners from almost all parts of the east. A considerable proportion of the motley group collected on the beach, consisted of Malabar Mahomedans, called Chuliahs, who here, as in their own country, were readily to be recognised by their manner, partaking as much of idleness as of expectant curiosity. They seemed industrious only in prying into the appearance and countenances of strangers as they arrive; an occupation which doubtless they turn to their advantage in some way or other. Silly as at first sight it seemed to be, it is far more congenial to the habits of man, than the cold, apathetic air of the natives of Bengal. We had not proceeded far, before a more interesting and more gratifying scene was expanded to our observation. Industry, active, useful, manly, and independent, seemed here to have found a congenial soil and fostering care. The indolent air of the Asiatic was thrown aside. Every arm laboured to produce some useful object, and every countenance teeming with animation, seemed, as it were, directed to a set task. With the air, they had lost even the slender frame of the Asiatic; and the limbs, and

muscularity, and symmetry were those of another and more energetic race. These were Chinese, a people highly valuable as settlers, by reason of their industrious and very regular habits, who had established on this spot the mechanical arts, on a scale which might even vie with that of European artists, but which we should look for in vain in any other part of India. It was a pleasing and gratifying spectacle, so much are we in India accustomed to the opposite, to see a numerous, very muscular, and apparently hardy race of people, labouring with a degree of energy and acuteness, which gave to their physical character a peculiar stamp, and placed them in a highly favourable point of view, when compared with the habits of the nations around them. Their manner of using their instruments, so different from the puerile style of Indian artists, had in it much of the dexterity of Europeans: while their condition bespoke them a flourishing and wealthy tribe. All the principal shops, all important and useful employments, and almost all the commerce of the island, was in their hands. Under the patronage of the British Government, they soon acquire riches; they meet with entire protection of property and person, and are cherished by the government, which, in return, derives benefit from their industry, and from the commercial and profitable speculations in which they usually engage.

The town, in this our first visit, appeared to be of considerable extent, very neat, clean, and handsome, and populous to a very unusual degree, that of the whole of the island, which is stated to amount to 30,000, being chiefly collected together in this place. The style of their houses is particularly neat, very light and striking. They are composed almost exclusively of wood, and in a great proportion of leaves of the palm, as in those of the poorer inhabitants. They are raised from the ground from four to six feet or more on pillars, and a ladder leads to the apartments. The thatch is made of the light leaves of the palm, and forms an elegant roof, less subject to conflagration than we should have expected from materials of this sort. Flame instantly excites rapid combustion, but it is said to resist fire in the form of spark; when once on fire, however, there is no subduing the mischief. Mr. E. compares this combustion to that of Slop's wig, which was no sooner lighted than it was consumed. The huts are laid out in right lines, and of convenient breadth; the houses are in different compartments, and are tolerably uniform, clean, and well-lighted. The parts occupied by the Malabar inhabitants have but little to recommend them, either in point of cleanliness or of neatness. Profiting by the mildness of the climate, they look not beyond shelter from the

elements, and seclusion from the public eye: a mean and sordid house afford both to their satisfaction. Ornament is never dreamt of, and even comfort is but little considered. Unlike to these, the Chinaman aims at neatness and even elegance in his dwelling, after having satisfied the more important objects of comfort and utility; hence the latter is rarely to be seen idling or sauntering about the streets: more numerous wants, more energetic occupations, more generous diet, demand more constant attention, and their gratification encroaches on his leisure hours. The Indian rarely passes an European of any rank without making an obeisance to him; and is in general abundantly submissive. The Chinaman will not submit to this distinction, whether from national pride and becoming independence of mind, or from assumed insolence, unauthorised, perhaps, in his native country, does not appear. However this may be, the latter is certainly the most becoming custom. The object of the Chinese in banishing themselves thus voluntarily from their native country, is doubtless to gain a more comfortable subsistence, and to accumulate money sufficient to maintain themselves at home. Yet they do not appear to hoard with mean avidity; they are, on the contrary, considered as rather an extravagant people, whose principal care is to procure good fare, though of a coarse

description, according to our European ideas. All the best meat and fish, more particularly pork and ducks, the favourite food of the grave disciples of Confucius, are at this place the portion of the Chinese. It is alleged, however, that they are at times contented with morsels of less delicacy; and that the canine tribe suffer occasionally from their rapacious disposition, and carnivorous appetites. The good condition in which their dogs are usually seen has probably had some share in giving rise to the opinion of their feeding on them, for scarcity of food cannot be urged in extenuation of the practice, if indeed it require extenuation.

In proceeding to the governor's country-house, we were much delighted with the great profusion of vegetable productions that was every where observable. As might be expected, we found here the more common species of Palm, Cocoa and Areca, growing in great luxuriance. Numerous species of Convolvuli and Parasitical Plants lined the hedges, and covered the extreme branches of the trees. The low ground abounded with herbaceous plants, and the whole resembled a beautiful and picturesque garden. In the hedges, and in the waste lands, swamps and low grounds, which form a tolerably broad belt between the hills and the sea coast, the botanist finds a rich and highly interesting harvest. The neighbour-

ing forests, vallies, ravines, and hills, are still more interesting. At every step he will discover new plants; and in this comparatively small island, he will find a variety of vegetation well calculated to delight and to astonish him. It would seem as if nature had taken a peculiar pleasure in establishing her more delightful domain in these islands. Nothing can exceed the extreme luxuriance, vigour, and variety of the vegetable products. The more grand features of mountain, precipice, and valley, are dispensed with unsparing hand. Reckless of the comfort, and disregarding the convenience of man, here nature has, as it were, placed her rich gifts beyond the reach of his modulating hand. From luxuriance so lavishly bestowed scarce can he extract a scanty subsistence, scarce can he render it subservient to his wants or his pleasures; and he who maintains that this world was made alone for man, might, amid such scenes, find room to doubt. The *cui bono* must at every step occur to his mind; he will soon discover that the tenants of so much luxuriance are reduced to a very scanty number, and these of the lowest order of animated creatures; birds, lizards, reptiles, insects, and a very few predaceous quadrupeds. The poet may select such scenes for the abodes of bliss, of happiness, and of mortal felicity; but the philosophic inquirer

will look to countries of less flattering aspect for the more favourable existence and development, in the social state, of the mental faculties of the human race.

We were now at liberty to employ our time agreeably to our respective inclinations. The surrounding forests and hills afforded endless enjoyment to those attached to natural history. They therefore claimed no ordinary share of my regard. Every day continued to add something to my little stock; while such is the salubrity of the climate, that no danger seemed to be apprehended from the most free and continual exposure even to the heat of a meridian sun, under circumstances of fatigue, exhaustion, and the greatest exertion; and to penetrate to any distance into the woods, or to ascend the steep and rugged sides of the hills, necessarily exposes one to such conditions. Compared with the botanical objects, the zoological are but scanty. Yet in this department we were able to effect the commencement of a collection. The most singular animal we as yet procured was the Galeopithecus variegatus, an animal covered with the softest fur; furnished with a broad expansion of the skin, extending from the head along the neck to the forefeet, which are palmated; from thence to the hind-feet, also palmated, and from this to the extre-

mity of the tail. By means of this membrane it is able, for a short distance, to support itself in the air. In the night-time it is active and lively; in the day, dull, lazy, sleepy, and annoyed at being disturbed. It has two pectoral mammæ. Those of the female are of considerable size. The voice is harsh, sharp, screaming, and disagreeable. It feeds on fruit, and would seem to be easily domesticated.

In some points this singular animal has a strong affinity to the genus Lemur; but its elongated head, and comparatively small eyes, and more especially the want of incisorial teeth in the upper jaw, shew that it has been with propriety removed to a different genus.

We procured also, during the first few days of our stay, a species of Felis, said to be common in the woods. It has much the appearance of a species of Viverra. The body is very long, though in other respects it is nearly of the size of a cat. It is remarkably fierce, and flies at every thing that approaches; body black, with gray stripes, tail very long, breast whitish.

A handsome species of Sciurus. The head large and globular; body and tail dark gray; belly brown; top of the tail brown.

A species of Vespertilio.

The number of birds that we saw was in-

considerable. The principal are the Buceros, Pelican, (in Mr. Philips's grounds several are domesticated,) several species of Alcedo, a solitary Adjutant, a fishing Vulture, five species of Certhia, and several other Passeres; of Corvus two species; Fulica; and Columba two species.

To describe or to enumerate the numerous vegetable productions which are to be found in this island, is but little compatible with the plan of a journal such as this. For an account of what has been done in this way, I refer to the catalogues, descriptions, and drawings. Several circumstances have conspired to render these less extensive and less complete than was desirable. The mechanical labour and personal fatigue, incurred in collecting materials, were necessarily very great; that of preserving them afterwards considerable; and the aid to be derived from persons of the labouring classes was not always at my disposal. Neither was the present season the most favourable for botanical pursuits. The brumal distance of the sun is felt, even in the intertropical regions. In these islands more particularly, this distance is rendered sensible, by unusual vicissitudes in the atmosphere, not only in point of temperature, but as regards the state of the winds, their capacity for retaining or depositing moisture; the greater prevalence of electric phenomena; the

remarkable variations in the appearance of the clouds. Rains at this time are prevalent. Towards evening the clouds accumulate in thick masses, the winds often blowing with tempestuous fury, and the face of day is darkened; the effect of these circumstances on the vegetable world is very sensible, and yet the thermometer at this period of the year rarely descends under 70° near to the equator. But even this indicates a degree of cold, which in these climates acts more sensibly on the human body than would be easily credited by an inhabitant of a cold region. The effect is, doubtless, the more powerful from the presence of universal moisture in the air, amounting very commonly to saturation. A degree of brumal influence is therefore extended to the vegetable world; the greater number of plants have ceased to flower; many trees cast a large proportion of their leaves, and have a degree of nakedness not common to them at other times. This influence is still more sensibly felt on vegetation at various elevations above the sea. On the hills it is most observable in arborescent botany. On the highest, very few plants, and those chiefly herbaceous, are now to be found in flower. In the plains, however, and in the sheltered acclivities of mountains, this circumstance is less observable. Besides, with a considerable number of the plants which grow

in such places, the present is the proper and natural period of flowering; and the number is not inconsiderable of such as are to be found in flower, or in fruit, at all seasons of the year.

The altitude of the mountain ridges in Penang is not so great as to produce a very marked difference in the geographic distribution of its vegetable productions. The highest point of land is that on which the flag-staff is placed; and this, by barometric measurement, gives an altitude of two thousand two hundred and twenty-three feet, above the governor's house, which may be reckoned about twenty-five feet above the level of the sea; so that the greatest altitude will be two thousand two hundred and forty-eight feet. Within this space, however, the more experienced botanist, will detect a sensible difference in the distribution of the vegetable forms. In the low grounds which extend from the sea coast to the base of the hills, and for some distance up their flanks, he will recognise the favoured region of the Palms, and of the greater number of the Scitamineæ, vying with the former in utility, whilst they even excel them in the beauty of their general appearance.

Of the intertropical plants, the most superficial observer will have remarked, that a considerable proportion are influenced scarcely less in their geographical distribution by longitudinal than

by latitudinal position; and, if we divide the globe into hemispheres, we shall find that the plants of an eastern differ from those of a western hemisphere scarcely less than those of the northern from the southern. We may thus observe a constant tendency to confine plants to a particular spot, to isolate, and to increase their number; and that though, like man, some are capable of existing in a great variety of climates, yet that these are to be considered as exceptions to a great and general rule. Within the tropics this limited distribution of plants is more remarkable than in the other zones. It is especially observable in the distribution of Palms, Scitamineæ, and the more valuable spices and aromatics. Heat alone is not sufficient for their production, or we should find them more general throughout the torrid zone, while, in fact, they are respectively confined to very narrow limits. Within the tropics, from the equator to nearly 20° N., and on the level of the ocean, or but slightly elevated above it, we distinguish a belt, within which are contained almost all the Palms with which we are acquainted. They constitute the most remarkable vegetable production within this space. As to distribution, we notice various points at which, without apparent alteration of temperature, they are respectively limited.

Of the Cocoa-nut we may remark, that it

grows with the greatest luxuriance and perfection in the Maldive and Laccadine Islands, on the south and west coasts of Ceylon, on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, and west as far as Bombay. At Penang this Palm is evidently less productive, and therefore less extensively cultivated. It is replaced by the Areca catechu; by Nipa fruticans, Cycas circinalis, and a few others. The Sea Cocoa-nut, as it is called, is still more limited in its distribution; and the Borassus gomutus is almost equally so. Here, too, it is rare to see a single specimen of the Borassus flabelliformis, a palm so common in other parts of India. Peculiarity of soil does not appear to be the sole cause of the occurrence of some, or of the want of other species of the Palm tree. The soil of Penang and of the opposite coast is of various descriptions and qualities, and probably suited to the production of the whole tribe, being in some parts sandy, hard and poor; in others, of a stiff, iron-coloured clay; in others, soft and spongy, constituting extensive morasses; in others, thick, black, and rich, containing a large proportion of vegetable matter.

It has been remarked, that the mountain ranges are but of moderate altitude, and that, therefore, we must not look for very great or striking differences in the distribution of vege-

table forms, as connected with this circumstance. Arborescent vegetation here exists in its fullest vigour, to within two or three hundred feet of the summit of the loftiest peaks; and it may be observed, that the forests generally abound in wood of uncommon altitude. At the elevation of nearly one thousand feet, a considerable number of diminutive, but elegant herbaceous plants are to be found, which do not occur at a less elevation, and we meet with several species of Ferns in the same situation. The gigantic Grasses of the plains here cease to grow: Parasites, Epidendra, and Contortæ increase in number. Within a few hundred feet of the summit we find an arborescent Fern of great magnitude, and a species of Yew is said to occupy a similar range on a contiguous hill. On the summit of the two highest peaks, arborescent vegetation is evidently stunted, and the trees are of shrubby forms, yet the productions of the plains will here thrive, with the assistance of cultivation. We found Canna indica, Carica, Mussænda frondosa, and various other plants growing around the Bungalows built upon the summit of the principal peak. This elevation must certainly afford a fine prospect from its summit, but as we were unfortunate in the state of the weather at the time of our visit, I am not enabled to speak duly in its favour.

The agricultural produce of this island is but inconsiderable; and although much care is at the present time bestowed in clearing the hills, for the purpose of introducing the cultivation of Coffee, Spices, *&c.*, the success of the experiment must as yet be left for the ascertainment of futurity. The labour and expense of clearing steep hills of exuberant woods must necessarily be very great; and where arborescent vegetation exists in such vigour, it will always be a matter of much difficulty to prevent the ground becoming again rapidly covered with forest. It is to be feared, too, that the sloping sides of granitic hills will not long continue favourable to the growth of plants requiring a peculiar soil, and modified by the care bestowed upon them by man. It is known that the more valuable productions of the botanical world require the richest soil, and most assiduous and unremitted care on the part of the cultivator. They have, in fact, become, in a great measure, the work of his own hand; in their perfect condition frequently incapable of maintaining their existence independent of his care. When abandoned, they soon revert to their original meagre condition, with difficulty to be identified with the cherished product of cultivation, whilst of some plants, as of the more valuable of the Cerealia, we look in vain for the parent stock. Hence it is, that disregarding or

forgetting this fact, we are apt to consider the soil as excellent which supports that astonishing quantity of vegetation we observe throughout these islands. To enumerate the useful and curious plants this island produces, either spontaneously or by culture, is a task too extensive. Pepper is the principal article. It is produced principally on the southern parts of the island, on the slopes of low hills, and on the narrow level belt which intervenes between them and the sea-shore. The cultivation is almost exclusively in the hands of the Chinese, who conduct it with a degree of art and neatness, unknown in any other part of the East. For an account of the cultivation of pepper, see *Marsden's History of Sumatra.* The plants are supported on the stems of the Erythrina indica, and occasionally on those of the Morinda citrifolia, which are planted with them for this purpose. The Nutmeg may be considered as the next in importance of the agricultural products. Its cultivation is, on the whole, attended with considerable success; the trees are large, vigorous, and produce a great quantity of fruit, yet it has required upwards of twenty years to give earnest of success; and it is stated, that as yet no exportation of this article has taken place. The number of trees, at present on the island, is rated at one hundred and fifty thousand, of which one-

third only are in a condition to bear fruit. Mr. Brown states the produce of a single tree at one thousand nuts annually, and this number is at present sold in the market for five Spanish dollars, and the mace, which amounts to about one-fourth of the weight of the nuts, is sold for something more than the above-mentioned sum. The first fruit is reaped after the seventh year.

The Clove is also cultivated with success. Some trees which I have seen growing at the base of the hills, and on the skirts of the forest, where they were planted under the shade of other trees, seemed to flourish with great vigour.

Mr. Brown states the produce of a single Coffee plant at four pounds.

We were too late to enjoy the Mangosteen in its greatest perfection, yet from the few which were still to be procured, we considered it well entitled to the encomium so often bestowed upon it by travellers.

I proceed to mention the more general plants used in the domestic economy of the natives.

Pandanus lævis—the leaves afford a strong cordage, used for making nets and other purposes.

A species of Urtica is cultivated for a similar purpose.

Erythrina indica, } supporters to the pepper
Morinda citrifolia, } plant.

Nipa fruticans—the leaves are used universally for thatching.

Calamus—various species, applied to endless useful purposes on the island, and exported to China.

Bromelia ananas—the pine-apple, three principal varieties; *a.* long, conical sort, of a red colour, with numerous sprouts from the base.

b. With elegant, variegated leaves; the crown leaves and sprouts at the base of the fruit also variegated.

c. Common species.

The Pine-apple thrives here with unusual luxuriance: some that were shewn to us weighed from four to six pounds. They may be had for a mere trifle in the markets.

Musa paradisiaca, or plantain. These are also produced in great abundance and very cheap.

December 25.—Visited Qualla Muda, on the opposite shore of Queda. The country here, to the distance of seven or eight miles from the sea, is low, flat, and swampy, covered for the most part with almost impenetrable jungle, the secure haunt of tigers, leopards, rhinoceroses, and occasionally of elephants, its vast swamps being unfavourable to the latter. The soil consists of a stiff, blue clay; on the beach, here and there, disposed in beds, very plastic,

purely aluminous, and of a red colour; in other parts the soil consists of a tough, black, soft and spongy mould, apparently very closely allied to peat-moss. Where this soil exists, the ground is always boggy; the moss is bound together by tough vegetable fibres; the surrounding water assumes a black colour, of a bitter and peculiar taste, and a strong, disagreeable odour. The appearance is quite peculiar. I have not, in India, seen any thing resembling peat-moss so closely as this soil does *. It is apparently in progress to the formation of that substance. During our excursion we passed some rich fields of rice. The ground was so soft, that we sunk to the knee at every step. We had not proceeded far, before we came upon a bullock that had just been killed by a tiger, in all probability of uncommon size, the impression of his paw being equal in breadth to twice that of a man's hand. The bullock, a fine, large, and fat animal, had been killed by a blow on the neck, by which the vertebræ appeared to have been dislocated or broken, while the superficial veins were torn open by the tiger's claws. A small part of the rump only had been eaten. In the following night the tiger returned, and carried off the carcass to the distance of about one hundred yards.

* Dr. Francis Hamilton has noticed several instances of what may be called peat formations.—*Buch. MS.*

The plants on this coast differ considerably from those of Penang. They also exhibit considerably less variety. The Argus pheasant is common, and a very considerable variety of gallinaceous birds is carried from hence to Penang. The black leopard, and a species of wild goat, probably an antelope, are also found. The resources of the mountains and inland parts are almost entirely unknown, although, perhaps, there exists no better field in the world for the naturalist than is afforded by this peninsula, throughout the whole of its extent.

CHAPTER II.

LEAVE PRINCE OF WALES' ISLAND.—LUMINOUS APPEARANCE OF THE SEA.—PULO DINDING.—MALACCA.—DESERTED APPEARANCE.—SLAVES.—LITTLE CARIMON.—ISLANDS.—VEGETABLE PHENOMENON.—SINGAPORE.—MILDNESS AND SALUBRITY OF THE CLIMATE.

January 1st, 1822.—Visited mount Palmer, on the south coast of the island. The scenery in the pass leading to it is beautiful, the finest in the island. The whole tract abounds with a great variety of plants. A road, practicable for horses, has been made across this pass; and on the south coast, a tank has been constructed for the purpose of affording water for ships that do not choose to enter the harbour.

4. We returned on board the vessel, carrying with us two boxes of nutmeg plants for the King of Siam.

5.—Sailed out by the south passage; for several days following we were for the most part becalmed within sight of land; the great chain of mountains still appearing bold, and many of the peaks of considerable elevation.

Nothing is more singular in these seas than their phosphorescent appearance by night, the ocean shewing like a vast lake of liquid fire, melted sulphur, or phosphorus. In many of the

bays, such as the harbour at Prince of Wales' Island, the bodies which emit this singular light exist in such vast quantity, that a boat may readily be distinguished at the distance of several miles by the brilliant light, resembling that of a torch, proceeding from the water agitated by her bow and oars. We have seen the sea rendered of a green colour and slimy appearance, by day, so that it might have been taken for the green vegetable matter common on stagnant pools. We have taken up a quantity of this green-coloured water, and by keeping it till night, have ascertained that the green colour by day, and the phosphorescent appearance by night, were occasioned by the same substance.

The causes of this luminous appearance of the sea are doubtless various in different parts of the ocean. We know that fish, when dead, afford similar light, and experiments have shewn that dead fish immersed in sea water, after a time, afford it also. The spawn of fishes is said to afford it, and putrefaction is considered as a very common cause of this appearance. In the present instance it appeared unequivocally to proceed from innumerable small granular gelatinous bodies, about the size of a pin's head. These when taken upon the hand moved about with great agility for a second or two, when they ceased to be luminous and remained immoveable.

9.—Landed in the evening on Pulo Dinding, a beautiful granitic island, like those we had hitherto seen, covered with thick, almost impenetrable woods, from the margin of the sea to its summits. Its altitude may be two or three hundred feet. Its vegetation is luxuriant and varied. The soil is dense, black, and apparently very rich, held *in situ* by the density of the woods; the proportion of vegetable mould is uncommonly great. Two species of Palm grow luxuriantly in the ravines; and in moist places a species of Crinum, with leaves about three feet long, covers considerable tracts. The hills are too steep ever to afford a prospect of favourable cultivation, even for such plants as Coffee. The arborescent vegetation is of much less altitude than that of Prince of Wales's Island. There is, however, no want of irrigation. Several small rivulets were visible; but similar to many parts of the Queda shore, the water here was rendered of a blackish colour by the peculiar soil through which it percolates. It resembles the water in pits from which peat-moss has been taken; the taste is bitter and disagreeable.

At about half a mile distant north from an old and ruined fort, once occupied by the Dutch, we found an Epidendrum of gigantic size, the most elegant plant perhaps of the numerous tribe to which it belongs. Nothing in the vegetable

world could exceed in beauty the appearance of this stately plant as it stood erect on the stem of an aged tree, surrounded by its flowing leaves, rather resembling the frond of a palm than the leaf of an herbaceous plant. The flowering spike alone exceeded six feet in length, contained nearly one hundred flowers, and was now in full blossom. The flowers exhaled a most grateful but mild odour; they were about two inches and a half across, and upwards of four, including the foot-stalk, in length.

It is only on the sea-coast that we have an opportunity of viewing the materials which constitute the mass of this island, every other part being covered with soil. We here see nothing but granite. This granite, however, as will be seen by the specimens, is of different structure from that of Prince of Wales' Island, and the other varieties we had observed. In many masses it is almost a pure feldspar, finely crystallized and excessively hard. In other parts we find narrow veins of gneiss traversing masses of the granite; and in other parts the granite assumes a porphyritic appearance, containing, imbedded, numerous small nodules of gneiss.

In this vicinity, the great continental chain of mountains gradually diminishes in altitude, occasionally offering considerable interstitial distance between their summits, which now become

more rounded as well as of lower elevation, whilst the whole chain bends more towards the south-east, leaving an extensive flat land between its base and the sea. This flat tract, however, is yet somewhat elevated above the sea, and at several points, particularly on its oceanic border, as at Parcelar Hill and Rachado Point, rises into solitary, isolated hills, of a conical shape, rounded at top, but of inconsiderable height. The general features of the country had now altered considerably; the hilly eminences are probably constituted of sandstone or clay slate. The country is everywhere covered with wood to the water's edge.

14th.—Arrived at Malacca.

On examination, we found the small hills about this place, and the substratum of soil generally, to consist of a compact, nodular iron-shot clay, used commonly in building. In its geologic locality it is soft and easily cut into oblong masses like large bricks, which become very hard by exposure to the air. The old and now ruined fort, the Portuguese church, &c., are built of this material. It is very heavy, and appears to contain a large proportion of iron. This substance is common in Ceylon, and on the Malabar coast, it is used for building and for making roads. It is there known by the name of kabouc. No other mineral was here observable. In Ceylon

it is found towards the base of the mountains, in the vicinity of granite rocks.

At Malacca, the country is for the most part low, the small hills of iron-shot clay being scarce an exception to this appearance. About a mile inland it is swampy and covered with wood. The soil is a thick and stiff clay, apparently very favourable for the cultivation of rice. There appears to be no want of water; yet with these advantages, the place does not raise rice for its own consumption. The Dutch, who largely expatiate on the capacity of the country, attribute this circumstance to the indolent habits of the Malayan race, who for the most part are cultivators of the soil on the shores of this peninsula. The cause more probably arises from the want of due encouragement to agriculture; from mismanagement; from unfavourable terms in the tenure of land; and in part perhaps from the existence of slavery amongst the Dutch. Wherever this, the true cause, exists, it operates forcibly to check the cultivation of the more valuable of the products of human industry, under circumstances highly favourable to its development. In vegetable products of less value, but that are reared with little labour or care,—as fruit, the place abounds. The Mangosteen is here found in the greatest perfection, a most delicious fruit, and justly the boast of the east. The Plantain, the

Durian, the Champada, the Jack, &c., constitute a large proportion of the food of both natives and Dutch, who may be considered as naturalized to the climate, possessing similar tastes, and in some degree even the manners of the native inhabitants. But fruit, however delicious or abundant, when it constitutes the food of a people, must be considered as affording at the best but a wretched subsistence, inferior to even the worst of the Cerealia. For the existence of an abundant supply of excellent fish upon their coasts, the inhabitants are still more indebted, than for the produce of their fruit-trees.

On entering this place, we were forcibly struck with the contrast which it afforded, in point of commercial importance, with the very beautiful and interesting settlement at Prince of Wales's Island. Here five or six vessels at the utmost lay scattered and straggling in an extensive bay. There hundreds of ships of all descriptions, sizes, and nations, were seen crowded together, the sure indication of maritime prosperity. In Malacca, every third house was shut up and appeared to be abandoned. The streets were solitary and deserted. A lonely inhabitant sauntering in his verandah, or idly lolling or smoking at his door, only served to render the scene more dreary, sad, and melancholy. Even the Chinese, of whom, however, but few now remain, seemed

to have forsaken their habits of industry, and afforded the discordant spectacle of reluctant idleness. In Penang all was activity, and bustle, and zeal. The population of the two places will not bear a comparison. Yet Malacca possesses many advantages over the other settlement. In territorial extent, it is unrestricted. The climate is mild, equable, salubrious, and agreeable. Numerous tribes of Malays surround the settlement in every direction, who it is to be supposed might, if encouraged by proper management, be gradually brought to enter upon commercial speculations, and to increase agricultural produce, to the mutual advantage of both parties. The Dutch, however, it is to be feared, have still to learn how to reconcile the native powers to their system of government. A degree of suspicion and distrust is but too obvious in the intercourse they entertain with each other.

Here we had but little opportunity of observing the mode of living and manners of the Dutch people. In Malacca, as at the Cape, almost all private families take lodgers into their houses. We, during our short stay, resided at a house intermediate between an inn and a private house. We here saw but little of that neatness and cleanliness said to be inherent in Dutch people. A room, intended for dining in, and so forth, is kept in tolerable order. The bed-rooms are

wretched, small, dirty, and ill-aired. The people generally appear to be very poor. Their mode of life mean; their food coarse and indifferent, except fish, which is excellent. Every necessary of life is extremely dear. A fowl costs about half-a-crown, and other articles are in proportion.

Every family possesses a large number of slaves, who are mostly employed in domestic affairs. There were upwards of thirty of different ages and sexes belonging to the family in which we resided. Their condition did not on the whole appear to be one of peculiar hardship They, however, may be considered a wretched race, an appearance they derive chiefly from the want of clothing, and the existence of other marks of their mean and abject condition. Of the domestic slaves, however, some are decently and even richly clad. Their owners, in such cases, take a pride in dressing them even in costly ornaments, as of gold, silk, *&c.* A considerable portion of their property is often laid out in this way, and the slaves themselves are said to lay out their small gains, if such fall to their lot, in the purchase of such articles.

During our short stay at this place, we procured a considerable number of birds. They were chiefly brought for sale by the Malay inhabitants.

Landed on the island of Little Carimon. We had here another proof of the alteration of structure which the country had undergone. In this vicinity, the islands become extremely numerous, forming perhaps the most beautiful, as they do the most extensive, Archipelago in the world. Of these innumerable islands, many, like that under consideration, are of a hilly nature, but differ from those of primitive countries, by exhibiting rather a moderate elevation, rounded at top, and for the most part sloping gradually towards their base.

These numerous islands are as various in form, as in extent and elevation. Some are simple masses of bare rock, scarcely appearing above water; others extend several miles in length and breadth, often forming safe bays and extensive inlets. Some are flat throughout their whole extent, others consist of hilly masses only; of all it may be remarked, that wherever any soil exists, however scanty or however poor, and sometimes even where no soil is observable, they are not found, as might be expected, covered with a scanty, stunted, and impoverished vegetation; but everywhere planted with forests of the loftiest trees, forests in appearance scarce less ancient than the rugged soil on which they stand. The spectacle universally afforded among these islands, is in such respects equally beau-

tiful, interesting, and curious. The singular form which many of the trees assume, is not the least remarkable feature in the varied phenomena displayed by the vegetable creation. I allude more particularly in the present instance to a remarkable and very obvious disposition in the roots and lower part of the stem of the larger trees, to form winged appendages of great magnitude. These tabular compressed appendages are generally three or four in number. They obviously serve as supports to the weighty incumbent mass of stem and leaves; thus compensating for the want of depth of soil, a few inches into which the roots can penetrate, before they are obstructed by the surface of rock, they are thus forced to extend horizontally. A tree of this description, torn up by its roots, affords a singular spectacle, and one in which the economy of vegetable life is peculiarly remarkable, inasmuch as this economy is obviously exerted in overcoming the difficulties which oppose its development. Every crevice in the rocky base, every chink, has been occupied by the root; a thin, but hardy net work extends along the ground, to a distance often equal to the noble altitude of the tree itself. The thin winged appendages to the tree, or its supporting walls, as they may justly be termed, partake more of the nature of root than of trunk, though altogether

out of the earth. They possess generally a smooth, softish, and very thin cuticle, green underneath, abounding in the vegetable juices of the tree, and are remarkably hard. They sometimes extend horizontally, in a straight, but more commonly in a curved, direction, fifteen or twenty feet, their edges being six, eight, or more feet above the ground, gradually decreasing from the stem to the earth. In some instances they are formed into walls, resembling fortifications. Of this sort we saw a very fine specimen on this island.

We had now passed from granite mountains to rocks of the secondary formation, detecting but few of the connecting media which usually accompany these formations, and give indications of the proximity of either the one series or the other. At Malacca we observed extensive beds of iron-shot clay. Here we discovered the masses which compose these islands to be formed of a series of rocks of a different description. Though at first sight they seemed to be of very various structure, a more close inspection shewed them to consist of two principal varieties, intimately associated, and often passing into each other. Of these the principal rock was a horn-stone or flinty slate, disposed in large masses or thick beds, of which perpendicular sections, twenty feet or more in depth,

are occasionally exposed to view. The tabular masses are of great thickness, so as to render the stratification somewhat indistinct. They form an angle of nearly 40° with the horizon, and dip towards the east. The rock is extremely indurated, for the most part of a dark red colour, especially externally. It yields with the greatest difficulty to the hammer, but its edges are as brittle almost as glass, and fly into numerous minute splinters with sharp edges—fracture distinctly conchoidal, dull, and rather earthy. In many parts, it bears a near resemblance to flint, and readily emits fire when the hammer is applied to it. It is very uniform in its structure, presents no traces of imbedded minerals, or of organic remains. Is very extensive.

The next rock is a porphyritic horn-stone, and splintery horn-stone. The most common substance imbedded in the former of these, is a white or grayish, or greenish granular limestone. It also contains rounded masses of flinty slate. On the surface it is often cellular, the limestone in its decomposition having dropped, or been washed out. The masses of limestone vary in dimensions from an inch to several feet square.

January 20th.—Arrived at the new settlement of Singapore. The selection of this island, for

the purpose of a commercial settlement, has been extremely happy. It is placed in the direct route from Bengal towards China, and the numerous islands in the eastern part of the Archipelago. It is from its situation calculated to become the centre of the trade carried on in the China Seas and neighbouring countries, the kingdoms of Cochin China, Siam, *&c.*, as well as of that of the Malayan Peninsula, and the western parts of India. It affords a safe and convenient anchorage at all seasons of the year; while from its insular situation, and being surrounded on every hand by innumerable islands, it is alike exempted from the destructive typhoons so common in the China Seas, and the scarce less furious tempests that occur on the coasts of India. Here indeed the atmosphere throughout the whole circuit of the year is serene and placid, to a degree unknown perhaps in any other part of our globe. The smooth expanse of the seas is scarcely ruffled by the wind. We seem, as it were, to be coasting along the banks of a lake. Storms are here felt as it were by reflection. The commotion excited in the China Seas by the tempest, is propagated to this distance, where it is seen to give a peculiar direction and increased velocity to the tides, and even occasions a considerable swell. A similar but less remarkable effect is produced by a tempest in

the Bay of Bengal. Subject to the opposite impulses derived from these extensive seas, the tides amongst the islands become extremely irregular. At times they are found to run in one direction for several days successively, with the effect, in embayed places, of raising the water to a considerable height. In the numerous narrow channels which divide the lesser islands, this tide runs with very great rapidity, resembling water issuing through a sluice. The regular and periodical influence of the monsoons is but little, if at all, felt in these islands, the winds partaking more of the nature of what have been called sea and land breezes. Hence proceeds that uniformity of temperature which prevails in the atmosphere throughout the year. Hence also proceeds the more frequent fall of showers, and the absence of a proper, continued, and periodical rainy season. Few days elapse without the occurrence of showers, which thus produce the most agreeable effect in reducing the temperature and cherishing vegetation. Without the continued influence of moisture, these regions would certainly exhibit a far less cheerful picture, and the climate prove much less congenial to the human frame. Heat in the equatorial regions is thus benignly attempered to the constitution of man. It will be found to prove infinitely less pernicious to his system

than it does some distance beyond the tropics, particularly in dry and arid climates. It is thus that the hot and dry winds of Upper India, to the extent of more than ten degrees beyond the tropic, exert such powerful and destructive influence on organized beings, and more particularly on the human frame. Its effects are too well known to require description. Inanimate life is not merely at a stand; it is threatened with total destruction, and with difficulty preserves a scanty gleam of future existence. Animated beings retire to the thickest shades, and even there pant for existence. The loose frame and acclimated constitution of the native inhabitant, is not proof against its baneful influence. What then must be its influence on constitutions so highly susceptible of excitement as those of the inhabitant of the North of Europe? The fatality amongst European troops has given too ample testimony. The physiologist, who has not witnessed the effect of high temperature on the human system, will with difficulty believe it capable of extinguishing life, often within the period of a single hour from the commencement of excitement. Its effects are no less rapid than fearful to the spectator; the mind in such cases partaking of the general excitement in a degree amounting even to complete mania. Within the tropics such effects are of rare occurrence.

The sandy shores of the ocean, offering a surface highly favourable for the developement of heat by reflection, will often be found of high and oppressive temperature during the day. Yet the temperature during the night is even here agreeable. Moderation, in point of temperature, is further attested by its benign effects on vegetable nature, which obtains a degree of developement unknown, perhaps, in any other part of the globe. We see trees encroaching even on the domain of the sea, their roots and branches covered with marine shells, as oysters, &c. The bare rocks, the stems of the smoothest trees, the most scanty portions of soil, are covered with an endless variety of plants. In point of adaptation, we observe situations equally favourable, and generally much more so, for the production of plants in most other parts of the globe. The single circumstance of a peculiarly modified temperature, would alone appear to be wanting. We are often at a loss to discover in what manner many of these vegetables derive nourishment, under circumstances, to appearance, so unfavourable. Moisture alone would seem to many to be their sole source of aliment; the elements of water being separated and assimilated by the organs of the plant. The quantity of simple moisture, or rather of apparently pure water, which some plants raise from the earth, is un-

commonly great. This is beautifully exemplified in the organization of some creeping plants, in which the moisture is frequently conveyed the distance of forty, fifty, or a hundred yards, before it reaches the leaves, or fruit, or perhaps the assimilating organs of the vegetable. I have seen a plant of this sort, that had been accidentally cut across, continue to pour out pure, limpid, and tasteless water, in such quantity as to fill a wine glass in about half an hour. The stem and bark of this plant were quite green; there was no vestige of leaves, and it appeared that the water was proceeding unchanged to the extreme branches of the plant, in order to be assimilated. To other plants, even moisture, at least in any obvious quantity, does not seem to be indispensable. These are to be seen on bare rocks, without any ascertainable source of nutriment. They probably derive it from the air itself, or perhaps they decompose atmospheric air, and assimilate its elements.

This effect of equable though high temperature is not confined to the varied forms of vegetable life. The lower orders of animal existence attest its power no less strongly. The earth, the air, and the ocean, teem with life. Myriads of insects succeed to each other, in their labours at every varying period of the day and night. Some are busied in removing dead animal matter;

others prey upon the living; while, to the great majority, the vegetable world affords an inexhaustible source of nourishment. In the great ocean, we observe the economy of nature directed to a similar purpose, in the habits of innumerable Corals, Madrepores, and Molluscæ; here too, as in other departments of nature, we observe the dependence which is established between animals of more perfect organization, and those generally of the very simplest structure, the operations of the latter being exerted in eliciting from inorganic matter substances capable of maintaining the numerous tribes of the former class. It is in this point of view, that a Coral bank affords, perhaps, one of the most interesting spectacles in nature. We scarce know which most to admire, the great beauty and variety of their forms, the singularity and simplicity of their structure, or the magnitude of effect, produced by means apparently so inadequate. The analogy between them and plants is particularly impressive; nor can we overlook the circumstance, that they are destined to perform analogous operations.

Our residence at Singapore made us acquainted with several very curious productions of this sort, among them, a singular species of Alcyonium may be mentioned. It passes here, under the fanciful name of Neptunian Goblet. It is

in fact of the shape of a goblet, and its substance is intermediate between that of a sponge and a madrepore. Its colour, when fresh, is bright saffron, which becomes brown on drying. The body of the cup, the stalk, &c., are very neatly formed. They vary from two to five feet in height, and the cup is often three feet in diameter.

We obtained here a very singular species of Asteria, weighing from six to eight pounds. Its back formed a regular pentagon, with numerous round dots on its surface. The chasms on the lower surface are five in number, narrow, proceeding from the centre, furnished, as in other animals of this sort, with a double row of gelatinous, short, whitish feelers. The teeth not very obvious, but placed at the angular extremity of each flap. Its shell is of the consistence of very stout leather. Its internal structure consists of innumerable series of knotted threads. This was considered, in the place, as extremely rare, and the Malays have no name by which to distinguish it.

Among the more rare animals of the Class Mammalia, to be found at Singapore, we may reckon the following:

Halicora Dugong, called by the Malays, Duyong. The descriptions given of this singular animal by systematic writers, though incorrect

and imperfect, sufficiently attest that it has been long known to naturalists, and is therefore not to be considered as new in our catalogues. It is found on various islands in the Archipelago, has been seen at Malacca, and several times taken at Singapore. By report, it is extremely inoffensive, grows to the length of ten or twelve feet, and feeds on Fuci. Its flesh is esteemed, in flavour and delicacy, not inferior to the best beef. The skin is remarkably thick and tough; dried stripes of it are not to be distinguished from the thongs usually made from the skin of the Hippopotamus. The structure of the stomach is said to correspond in all respects with that of the ruminating animals. In some crania, there are tusks and incisors in both jaws, but in others neither, or the former only. The tusks scarce project beyond the jaw, probably never beyond the lip. The absence of the teeth in some may be owing to age. A single spiraculum opens near the top of the head. The form of this canal is cylindrical. Seen in the skeleton, it suggests the idea of its performing the office of a spiraculum. In the living animal, however, it may possibly be clothed with skin. The lips are said to be remarkably thick, and scantily covered with stout bristles.

Unlike the Arctic Walrus, this animal appears to delight in solitude. It is occasionally taken

by surprise near the lone islands of the Archipelago.

Flying squirrel, Pteromys Petaurista. This is of nearly the same size as the Galeopithecus variegatus, also common in this place. It is of a bright brown colour. Is seen towards evening flying from the tops of trees, and generally alighting about the middle of other trees, often at a considerable distance. In its flight, it merely expands the membrane extended between its legs, and floats gently through the air. When it has alighted on a tree, it quickly gains its summit, by a succession of leaps.

And lastly, two undescribed animals, of different genera.

The productions of the vegetable world are here scarcely less numerous, than in the beautiful and picturesque Island of Penang. Our *herborisations* in the neighbouring woods have already supplied us with some rare, and a few new plants. There is on the whole, a very obvious and striking difference between the plants of this island and that just mentioned; but there is this important distinction, that the difference refers for the most part to the individuals, and not to the families, or even genera: thus the acotyledonous plants occur in equal, if not greater, variety than in the latitude of the former place, and the species are almost all different. Yet only the fifth order of

the acotyledones of Jussieu occurs in numbers; of the Fungi, Algæ, Hepaticæ, and Musci, the individuals are remarkably infrequent. The decayed woods of extensive forests are favourable to the production of the Fungi, yet these are not numerous. We, however, met with some singular plants of this description.

Of the Order Fuci, there is here a remarkable species, usually found growing in isolated patches upon coral banks. It is pinnated, plumose, elegant, about a foot and a half in length, and of a whitish colour. It is endued with the property of stinging like nettles; the sensation produced is more acute, and more penetrating—more instantaneous, but somewhat less permanent. The hand is scarcely brought into contact with it before the wound is inflicted. A small corrugated, granular bag, filled with a transparent fluid, would seem to be the organ by which it produces this effect. These are no sooner touched than they discharge the fluid they contain. The plant soon loses this power, after having been removed from the water. The comparative scantiness of the Cryptogamiæ is amply compensated for by the number, variety, beauty, and utility, of the more interesting order of Phænogamous plants. Of the former, the abundance of a few individuals is considerable, whilst, respecting the latter order, we are less impressed

with the extent to which individuals exist, than with the great variety which they offer, a remark still more applicable to the zoology of this region than the botany.

Among the vegetable productions applicable to economical, commercial, and other purposes, is the Gambir; Nauclea Gambir and Aculeata, Linnæi, or nat. ord. Rubiaceæ of Jussieu.

Gambir, Terra Japonica, or Catechu, is obtained in large quantities from the leaves of this plant. The process is both simple and cheap. The leaves are collected three or four times a year: they are thrown into a large cauldron, the bottom of which is formed of iron, the upper part of bark, and boiled for five or six hours, until a strong decoction is obtained. The leaves are then withdrawn, and allowed to strain over the vessel, which is kept boiling for as many hours more, until the decoction is inspissated. It is then allowed to cool, when the Catechu subsides. The water is drawn off; a soft soapy substance remains, which is cut into large masses. These are further divided by a knife into small cubes about an inch square, or into still smaller pieces, which are laid on frames to dry. This Catechu has more of a granular, uniform appearance than that of Bengal. It is perhaps also less pure. The price in the market is four dollars per pecul, or 133½lbs. It is exported to Java and the other eastern islands,

where it is chiefly used for chewing with the betel leaf. The leaves of the plant when chewed give a very astringent taste, which is soon followed by a sweet, agreeable, and aromatic flavour.

We have already observed, that the most luxuriant vegetation of spontaneous growth affords no certain proof that the soil which has produced it will prove equally favourable for the production of the usual objects of culture. The soil of Singapore, however, would seem to be highly favourable for the cultivation of those products which are confined to intertropical regions. The Malay race, accustomed to a roving, unsettled life, have paid but little attention to agricultural pursuits. In this respect they are much in the situation of the Nomade tribes of northern Asia, or the more savage banditti of the Arabian deserts. Their labours, therefore, afford no adequate means of forming an estimate of the capacity of the soil. The skill and other resources of Europeans have not yet been directed to this end; neither has the well-proved industry of the Chinese had time to produce any considerable effect. The experiments, however, which have been made by the latter in the cultivation of pepper, and in the manufacture of Terra japonica, have given good earnest of what may be expected from agricultural operations of greater magnitude. Judging

from the natural appearance of the country, it may be presumed that the whole island is susceptible of a high degree of culture. The soil is gently undulating, here and there rising into low, mammated or rounded hills of inconsiderable altitude; the temperature is favourable; irrigation is abundant, and the soil of the interior parts is composed of sand and stiff clay, mixed up with a large proportion of vegetable matter, which gives it a very black appearance. There is a general tendency to the formation of swamps; but never to the extent of forming lakes. Rivulets and creeks abound in various parts of the island. The former are of the greatest value in a commercial point of view, by the facilities, as well as safety, which they afford for the transport and landing of goods. The rivulets are but of inconsiderable size. Their waters are almost always of a black colour, disagreeable taste, and peculiar odour, properties which they would appear to derive from the peculiar nature of the superficial soil over which they pass, in many parts resembling peat-moss, as has been already observed. The water, however, drawn from wells penetrating through the sandy base, is much less sensibly marked by these disagreeable qualities.

It is at the point where the fresh water of rivers and rivulets intermixes with that of the sea, that we find Mangroves chiefly to abound. The eco-

nomy of these plants is so strikingly peculiar in character, that they claim great attention from every observer. The species most common on the banks of rivers, in these climates, is the Rhizophora Gymnorhiza, a tall, handsome tree, often growing to the height of forty feet, covered with a thick profusion of large, oblong, fleshy leaves, disposed in tufts at the extremities of the branches. The singular form of the fruit in this tree is too well known to require description. The descriptions of botanists are, however, but indifferent.

The stem would seem to perform the usual functions of leaves, being covered with a remarkably thin epidermis. It is frequently submerged to the height of twelve feet or more, on which occasions it doubtless performs different functions. Numerous roots are thrown down from the branches, and in this manner a single tree is often conducted, as it were on props, over a great extent of ground, rendered intricate and impervious to animals.

Another species, the Rhizophora Mangle, is more independent of the presence of fresh water; often extending laterally along the sea-beach, or growing entirely in sea-water. Other species are possessed of similar habits.

The shade of these plants is the favoured abode of innumerable tribes of insects, particularly of

mosquitoes. Inhospitable, therefore, is the shade or shelter they afford to man *.

One great purpose which these plants serve, is that of preventing the encroachment of the sea upon the land. They even overcome this tendency, and produce the opposite effect, as the coasts of Singapore manifestly evince. It may readily be conceived, therefore, how ill judged is the practice of destroying barriers of this sort.

* Much stress has been laid on the apparent insalubrity of marshes of this sort; and it has been maintained that in many parts they are the chief, if not the sole, cause of the most fatal of intertropical diseases, remittent fever. Humboldt, in his Essay on New Spain, lays great stress on the effect produced by the growth of Rhizophora Mangle, Pothos, Arum, and of the other plants which flourish in a marshy soil charged with saline particles, in the production of yellow fever. Without calling into question the insalubrity of marshy situations in general, there appears great reason to believe that we are still ignorant of the actual causes of this frightful disease. The settlement of Singapore is possessed in an eminent degree of the circumstances which are thought to be most conducive in producing the disease. Yet here it is as yet unknown. An intertropical climate on the margin of the sea, a continually high temperature, rapid and intense evaporation, a humid and extensive series of saline and fresh water marshes exposed to a burning sun, the vegetative impulse in a degree of activity unequalled perhaps in any other part of the globe, the occasional suspension of herbaceous vegetation by long-continued heat, accompanied by drought, profusion of vegetable matter, as leaves, felled wood, fruits, &c., intermixed with animal matter, forming fomites in every stage of the putrefactive process, are amongst the more conspicuous of the causes to which the occurrence of this disease is usually attributed; and here all the causes enumerated operate with tenfold force.

In many parts they extend for miles into the country, until the soil on which they grow has been raised above the water, when they gradually give place to trees of another description; and in this manner lands favourable for the cultivation of rice are produced. Of this description extensive tracts exist in the neighbourhood of the settlement. A slight embankment would prevent the ingress of salt water along the banks of the creeks, and retain a supply of fresh water favourable for this species of culture. As yet, however, the pepper-vine, and nauclea, which require a dry and exposed soil, are almost the sole objects of culture. The neatness, the industry, the ingenuity displayed in plantations of this sort, afford a very gratifying spectacle, and attest the great progress which the Chinese nation has made in agricultural science. The Chinese may be considered as the sole cultivators of the soil. The woods are for the most part cut down by the Malays. The Chinese clear away the incumbent wreck, selecting the best woods for domestic purposes, converting the refuse into charcoal, palings, fences, &c., and enriching the soil with the ashes of the remainder. I have not observed the manufacture of the vegetable fixed alkali, potash, to be an object of attention with them. Their plantations, whether of pepper-vines or of gambir, are uncommonly neat, well trimmed,

and healthy. Their habitations are slight and temporary, inferior in many respects even to those of the Malays. They are constructed of bamboos, twigs, and rattans, and thatched with leaves of the Pandanus lævis, sewed together. They are always surrounded by a few garden shrubs, esculent roots, and vegetables. Several varieties of Musa and Amomum ; several species of Arum ; sometimes small plantations of Jatropha manihot, are of the most common occurrence. There is a manifest air of poverty in the dwelling of the Chinaman, and of negligence, slovenliness, and even meanness in his dress. He has scarce a stool or a bench to sit on. His furniture is scanty,—of the simplest kind, and constructed of the cheapest materials. In his culinary operations alone we observe an air of neatness and of cleanliness. It is here indeed that the Chinaman shines superior to all other Asiatics. Negligent of personal ornament, insensible to the advantages of comfortable lodging, he appears to entertain a just, nay, we may say, an exalted sense of the pleasures of good eating. To this end and aim are directed all his industry and ingenuity. The traveller who would judge of the comforts of the Chinese planter, must see him at his meals. How erroneous his judgment, were he to infer, from the sordid appearance of the labourer's hut, a corresponding degree of penury

in all other comforts. The peasant, thus indifferent to the advantages of comfortable lodging, will be found to live on the richest, though not always the most delicate fare. Pork, ducks, geese, the best kinds of fish, the rarest delicacies, are purchased at any price by the Chinese. The proportion of animal food consumed by them would appear to be incomparably greater than that used by any other description of labourers on the face of the globe. They seem to regard the quality of animal food less than the quantity or richness. The only point of consideration is, whether the alimentary mass will afford rich nutriment, or as Cobbett says, whether it will lay fat on their bones.

Hence the flesh of dogs, of rats, of monkies, of alligators, and other reptiles, afford in their turn, a savoury meal. The marine gelatinous fishes, Holothuria, Sepia, &c., and bird's nests, are ranked amongst the most delicate of Chinese dishes, for the most part reserved for the luxurious gratification of the epicurean palates of the wealthy. The abomination in which dog's flesh is held by the various tribes of the Archipelago has rendered the eating of it a reproach even amongst the Chinese emigrants, who will not always confess their propensity to feed on this social, but unclean animal.

The most prominent feature in the character of

the Chinese emigrant, is industry,—the best and highest endowment which he has attained. He is mechanically uniform and steady in the pursuit of what he conceives to be his immediate and personal interest; in the prosecution of which he exerts a degree of ingenuity and of bodily labour and exertion, which leave all other Asiatics at a distance. He labours with a strong arm, and is capable of great and continued exertion. He is not satisfied to bestow the quantity of labour necessary for the mere gratification of his immediate wants. Profusion and indulgence claim a share of the produce of his toils.

Next in the catalogue of his virtues, may be reckoned general sobriety, honesty, a quiet, orderly conduct, obedience to the laws of the country in which he resides; and, as is affirmed, a strong and unalterable sense of the important duties which parental affection inculcates. To this we may add a strong attachment to his native country, and the very questionable virtue of blind, undistinguishing admiration of, and submission to, all its laws.

Notwithstanding this fair exterior, we shall find on examination that the Chinese have but little real pretension to moral distinction amongst nations; of the sublime, soothing, and pathetic duties of religion they are as ignorant as they are regardless; a mean, senseless, and unworthy

superstition, the offspring of fear alone, has usurped its place amongst the many; while the learned affect a cold-hearted and scarcely intelligible theism. In all that regards the more amiable feelings of our nature, and that tends to unite the great family of the human race in closer union, they are still more deficient. A disgusting and culpable apathy, an involved and concentrated selfishness of gratification, a total disregard of the wants, and necessities, and helplessness of their fellow-creatures, marks the Chinese in their conduct through life. They know not the pleasure of doing good for its own sake. They not only talk of, but witness the misfortunes and distresses of their fellow-men, with an apathy of feeling little short of mockery. They will stipulate for reward with the wretch who is sinking in the water, before they will extend a saving arm. They will talk of the greatest scourges to which the human race is subject, famine, pestilence, war, as catastrophes almost to be wished for,—considering the survivors as benefited by the destruction of so many of their fellow-creatures. Their industry is the result of the quick sense of gratification which they derive from the indulgence of the more grovelling passions and animal appetites, and where these can be indulged without labour, the Chinese

will be found to indicate their full share of Asiatic indolence.

It must be confessed however that the Chinese are, in a political point of view at least, by far the most useful class of people to be found in the Indian Seas or Archipelago. Their robust frames, their industrious habits, and their moderate conduct, place them beyond competition. They furnish the best artisans, the most useful labourers, and the most extensive traders. Their commercial speculations are often extensive, often of the most adventurous nature; and we may remark by the way, that they are often immoderately fond of games of chance, as cards, dice, cock-fighting. Inebriety is a vice of which they are but rarely guilty. At their meals they indulge in the use of ardent spirits, undiluted, but never use them to excess.

In point of mental capacity, they would appear to be inferior to many other Asiatic tribes. They are chiefly distinguished by a certain mechanical turn in all they do; and even their mental operations partake of this distinction.

Notwithstanding the prohibitory laws of the Celestial Empire, there would appear to be no other limit to the extent of emigration than the capacity of individuals to procure a passage to the neighbouring countries, modified in some de-

gree by the greater or less demand for industry. It must be recollected however, that this emigration is to be considered as temporary, the majority of the Chinese calculating upon returning after a time to their respective provinces. Their wives,—or females of any description, are not permitted to accompany them abroad, to which circumstance it is perhaps chiefly owing, that the Chinese have formed no colonies or settlements; for the establishment of which their situation is peculiarly favourable. Superior in point of civilization, industry, and physical strength to the nations around them, they neither aim at conquest nor power over their weaker neighbours. They are content to be permitted to follow their respective occupations, and are satisfied with the fair returns of their labour. Yet in many of the commercial settlements of the Archipelago, they constitute the majority of the population; whilst in many of the Malay states, their proportion to the latter is so great as three to one; or even more. This is particularly the case in the mining districts of Borneo, as at Sambas, Pontiana, and more particularly in the surrounding country, where it is said that upwards of 30,000 Chinese are occupied in searching for gold dust. Their masters are here little better than savages; than whom none are more cruel or more despotic. Mild and just laws are un-

known to people in this state of society, and therefore cannot be urged as the cause of the unpretending conduct of the Chinese. This instance of general submission to a people so greatly inferior to themselves, stands so much in opposition to the ordinary conduct of man under similar circumstances, that we may be permitted to doubt whether it is to be reckoned a virtue or its opposite in the character of the Chinese; whether as affording a proof of their love of peace and horror of aggression, or rather as a demonstration of unparalleled pusillanimity and the total want of military ardour. Certain it is that the Malays hold them in contempt as opponents. The emigrant Chinese are almost exclusively from the provinces of Canton and Fokien, chiefly from the latter. It is this last also which furnishes the principal maritime population of China. They carry on a considerable commerce in junks throughout the China Seas and Archipelago, from Manilla to Penang, the boundaries of their maritime excursions on the east and west. Nothing can be conceived more rude, awkward, and unmanageable, than the vessels they navigate, called junks; except indeed we bring into the comparison their great ignorance of the science of navigation. A Chinese junk gives no bad idea of what one might suppose the ark to have been. She resembles more an oblong

substantial wooden house than a ship. In maritime affairs, the Chinese appear to have derived little or rather no benefit from their intercourse with Europeans. The immutable laws of the Celestial Empire forbid alteration: yet these laws could never have checked improvement for so many centuries; and we find that all vessels built by the Chinese, in the dominions of foreign powers, as at Siam, Cambodia, &c., as well as in their own country, are invariably of this form. The Malay race on the contrary, eagerly adopt improvements. We may observe a marked superiority in the naval architecture of the Buggis people for instance, a superiority which is daily increasing, in proportion as they become better acquainted with Europeans.

The junks which visited Singapore during our stay there, were from Canton Amoy, Cochin China, and the islands to the east. The larger vessels carried from two to three hundred tons burden. They had neither chart nor book of any description on board, nor any written document to point out their route. They had no means even of ascertaining the ship's way, neither did it appear that they kept any account of transactions on board. They had a rude compass, set in a wooden frame, and divided into twenty-four points, which they did not appear to put great dependence on, and this was probably

the only nautical instrument on board. Their mode of proceeding, is to set out with the favourable monsoon. After reaching a certain point without losing sight of land, they stand across the China Sea, calculating that they will, as they generally do, reach the opposite side in ten or twelve days. They make but one voyage across the China Sea in a year; on their return, they sometimes make a short coasting voyage in addition, after which the junk*is hauled up, covered with straw, and laid aside till the following season. The owner generally voyages in his own junk, but does not always navigate it, another individual attending to that duty. The crew have a share in the cargo.

Their provision consists of pork, fowls, rice, and abundant store of pickled greens in large tubs; the latter strongly reminds one of the sour crout of the northern nations of Europe, from which it probably differs but little. Tea is their favourite beverage; they use it at all hours of the day, making it in small quantities at a time; their cups contain little more than two or three drachms.

In a small recess in the poop, there is always to be found a sort of temple, ornamented with shreds of gold-leaf, or painted paper, and containing three or four small images of porcelain or wood, dressed in a tawdry and clumsy manner. These

are regarded as tutelary deities, to whom offerings of meat, rice, &c., are daily made. Their attributes, as far as we could comprehend their nature, seemed to be analogous to those of the Grecian deities that directed the winds and the rains.

Similar temples are to be seen in all the houses of the Chinese.

Inferior to these in the knowledge of all the arts of civilized life, as well as in industry, stature, strength, and general appearance; but their superiors in point of courage and military enterprise, and above all in the possession of an ardent mind and exalted imagination, stand the Malays, a race of people whose origin, still involved in obscurity, would seem to be of no remote date. The most favoured of their tribes, have as yet made but little progress in civilization, whilst the majority would appear to be enthusiastically attached to the unrestrained condition of savage life. The Malays constitute the principal maritime population of the Archipelago and neighbouring continent, in the different settlements of which they present themselves to the traveller under very different aspects. They are by nature less adapted to commercial pursuits than the Chinese, or the Chuliahs, or other natives of India, and are therefore easily beaten out of the field by them at the stations frequented

by Europeans. They are passionately attached to a sea-faring life, and their principal occupation is that of fishing.

Bold and enterprising in their maritime excursions, they hold the peaceful arts of civilized life almost in contempt. Negligent, slothful, and listless in their moments of ease, they display in the hour of danger and of enterprise, the most daring courage and intrepidity. They enjoy neither the good nor ills of life with the calm sobriety and moderation of other men. In action fierce, cruel, and immoderate, their leisure is passed in a sleepy indifference that approaches to the apathy of brute life.

Their character for treachery, though founded in truth, appears to be much exaggerated. This vice would appear to attach more to the state of society in which they are found to exist, than to any inherent propensity towards it in Malays generally. It must be confessed, however, that many of their practices are shocking to humanity. Their laws regarding the right acquired over property and persons falling into their hands at sea, by shipwreck or otherwise, shew them to be possessed of as little of the milk of human kindness as any other description of Asiatics *.

The condition of the lower class of Malays in these parts, is wretched beyond what we should

* See *Raffles, in Asiatic Researches.* Vol. XII.

conceive to be the lot of humanity in an intertropical climate; almost the whole of their life is spent upon the water, in a wretched little canoe, in which they can scarce stretch themselves for repose. A man and his wife, and one or two children are usually found in these miserable sampans. For subsistence, they depend upon their success in fishing. They have all the thoughtlessness of to-morrow that characterizes savage life. Their tackling is so rude and scanty, that they are often reduced to the most urgent want. When they have made a meal, they lay basking in the sun, or repose under the dense shade of the mangrove, till hunger again calls them into action. They have scarce a rag of cloth to secure them from the scorching noon-day sun, or to shelter them from the damp and noisome dews and exhalations of night. Their women are not less dexterous than the men in managing their boats. Their only furniture consists of one or two cooking pots, an earthen jar and a mat made of leaves of the Pandanus lævis, which serves to protect them from the rain.

In the numerous bays, inlets, and creeks, that surround Singapore, an inconceivable number of families live in this wretched manner, who have never possessed a house nor any sort of abode on the land. They are constantly roving about from place to place in pursuit of fish. What they have

succeeded in taking more than is required for immediate use, they dispose of to the fixed inhabitants, taking rice, sago, betel, and cloth, in return. We are struck with the analogy between such a life and that of the tribes which subsist by hunting. The Malay is equally attached to his mode of life, nor can he be persuaded by the example of those around him to relinquish it. This description of Malays goes by the appellation of Orang Laut, or men who live on the sea.

Others of the Malays have proceeded a step beyond this rude state; they possess houses and a fixed abode; they use garments and cultivate small spots of ground: their agricultural skill, however, has rarely extended to the cultivation of rice or other of the Cerealia. They surround their houses with a wooden paling, of sufficient extent to admit the culture of the plantain, the yam, the betel, and a few other useful plants for their own use.

They possess but little skill in the mechanical arts, and are employed as labourers almost exclusively for the purpose of cutting down wood in the forests, and clearing ground for culture. We neither find amongst them a carpenter, a mason, a taylor, or a blacksmith.

We are told that in the interior of Sumatra, the Malays are found in a still more civilized state; that of an agricultural people.

How tenacious is man of the savage state, and how slow and imperceptible are the steps by which he emerges from it. The Malays of the peninsula and of the straits of Malacca are at the present day scarce to be distinguished from their rude ancestors of many centuries back, as may be seen by the descriptions which our early navigators have given of them.

A number of the people called Orang Laut were brought to us for inspection. They were superior in condition; in appearance more civilized than many whom we had seen in the bays and creeks remote from the haunts of man. A portrait was taken of one of them, illustrative of the physiognomy and general appearance of the Malay race. Six of these men were more minutely examined. Their average height was five feet three inches; average weight nine stone eight pounds; average circumference of the chest, two feet ten inches; circumference of the clenched fist about eleven inches; average of facial angle 66½°; average temperature under the tongue 100°.02.

The other tribes of people that frequent the commercial settlements of the straits of Malacca, are Chuliahs, from the Malabar and Coromandel coasts, Buggis from Celebes, Siamese, Burmans, a few Arab merchants, &c.

The situation of the new settlement of Singapore may be described in few words. A plain,

nearly two miles in length, but of inconsiderable breadth in most parts extends along an elevated sandy beach, terminated on the west by an extensive creek, about a hundred yards in breadth, and running up into the land several miles.

The soil on the western bank of this creek is broken, consisting of low, rounded, sandstone hills, interspersed with level ground. The Chinese part of the population, and a few Malays, occupy this part of the settlement. Their campong is the workshop of industry, and affords at all hours a busy scene. The creek is navigable to boats of every description, and even to small ships at low water. On its banks are the storehouses, warehouses, &c., of the European and other principal merchants. The convenience for commerce is such that they can at all times, and in all weathers, land goods at their respective doors. Several parallel and cross roads extend from this line of houses over the plain, which is chiefly occupied as a military cantonment. A small stream of water divides this plain, which is surrounded by a mud wall, probably the remains of an ancient fortification, towards the east from another of greater extent, but only partially cleared of wood. In this last the Malays principally reside.

Behind the cantonment there is a hill of considerable height, on which it appears that it is

intended to erect a government-house, if the place be retained.

During our stay here, we made several interesting excursions to various points on the coast, and to the neighbouring islands, for the purpose of ascertaining the geological structure of the group. These were highly satisfactory. The result of our examinations I must relate on a future occasion. From the accuracy, experience, and extensive knowledge of Captain Dangerfield, we derived the most essential assistance. Without his aid we might have had occasional difficulty in discriminating the rocks and minerals that fell in our way.

On the 23d February, we re-embarked, and on the 25th left Singapore harbour, and stood out towards the extreme point of the Malay Peninsula, the wind blowing strong against us, but the sea, as usual, being little agitated.

On the 26th we gained the mouth of the straits at the distance of a few miles only from the shore. We had cloudy and rather damp weather, but the temperature exceedingly agreeable, and almost invariable during the day and night, at least the variation did not exceed three or four degrees. It seemed in every respect congenial to the human frame. We had again to remark the unaccountable paucity of sea-fowl in

these latitudes. At noon we fell in with His Majesty's frigate Topaze, Captain Richardson, from Canton and Manilla. The Captain sent a polite invitation to such of us as might choose to visit his ship. I went on board, accompanied by Rutherfurd.

During the period of his stay in China, the natives of that country had, as usual, assumed a tone of insolence and presumption too marked and too humiliating to be quietly submitted to by a commander in his majesty's navy. This led to representations on the part of Captain Richardson, which were as bold as they were displeasing to the Chinese. At length the Chinese in a tumultuous manner made a wanton and unprovoked attack upon his men on shore in their boat unarmed, drove them into the sea, and wounded a considerable number of them. The first lieutenant seeing the disturbance from the ship, immediately beat to arms, fired grape shot amongst the Chinese, and sent armed boats to the assistance of the men in the water; on the approach of which the Chinese speedily dispersed. The lieutenant thought that the Chinese were beyond the reach of the shot. It appears, however, that at least five persons were killed, and several wounded.

This affair was no sooner made known to the

Chinese in authority, than they put an immediate stop to the trade with the English, and demanded from the frigate a number of men equal to that of the Chinese who had been killed.

The captain resisted the proposal with indignation, and in his turn demanded of them justice and an apology for the unprovoked affront and unwarrantable attack on his men. In proportion as he remained firm and resolute, they became the less urgent in their demands. They even proposed to make the matter up, by suggesting that the captain should sign a paper which they brought ready prepared, to the effect that those who had actually killed the Chinese had either died of wounds, had fallen overboard, or otherwise perished. As he would not incur certain disgrace to himself and to his country, by asserting a palpable falsehood, the matter remained still unsettled, and the trade suspended, when he set out for Manilla.

In the evening, it being calm, mild, and agreeable, we landed in a spacious bay, with a sandy beach, interspersed with rocks, within a few miles of the extreme point of the peninsula. We found the rocks to consist entirely of horn-stone porphyry. We traced this rock to the extent of upwards of two miles, in the course of which it presents no appreciable difference. Large sur-

faces, divided into innumerable irregular masses, for the most part oblong, and occasionally brick-shaped, with an ochry fracture, presented themselves. The rock is extremely hard.

The land was, as usual, thickly covered with wood.

Forest, on the coast, formed chiefly of the following trees:—

Casuarina.

Hibiscus, two arborescent species.

Scævola.

Calophyllum inophyllum. This generally grows close by the sea-side, its roots being washed by the tide at high water.

Cycas revoluta. Very abundant; a more handsome palm than the C. circinalis. It was now in flower. The quantity of pollen discharged by the stameniferous plant was uncommonly great, and of an oppressively powerful odour. It appeared to us, on examining their structure, not at all extraordinary that this plant should long have been taken for a fern of gigantic size. A large, yellow-coloured, pine-shaped, squamate cone terminates the stameniferous plant. Each scale is somewhat of a triangular shape, the apex joining the central stem. On the under surface of the scale are innumerable sessile and minute globules, which burst exactly in the manner of many

of the ferns, and discharge a fine, strong-scented, yellow pollen. This palm rarely exceeds ten or twelve feet in height.

Besides these we observed a species of slender Caryota.

Also Nipa fruticans,

And a species of Calamus; and another of Urtica.

We caught several fish in the seine on the 27th and 28th February.

We stood over towards the coast of Borneo, with the wind strong, and quite against us. We now had a heavy swell and rough sea, which soon affected the less experienced amongst us with sickness to a distressing degree.

On the first of March we had sight of a lofty conical hill in Borneo, and on the 2d we came in view of the coast of that island. The wind, which had hitherto been steady and strong, sunk into a gentle breeze as we approached the land, passing from the N.E. to N.W. and N.N.W. with a calm sea.

On the 3d we were off the point called Tanjung api, and on the following day stood over in the direction of the islands called Natunas, the more southern of which we were in sight of, and even close to. Their vegetation seemed to be quite peculiar. We were at one time within two hundred yards of one of these islands; and

could observe along the beach several handsome scitamineous plants, and a considerable number of Palms. In this part of our passage, we found the weather, though rather damp, and for the most part cloudy, remarkably agreeable. The thermometer did not rise above 80°, nor sink below 78°, in the course of twenty-four hours, during our passage from the coast of Borneo to that of Cambodia.

An hourly register of the barometer, kept day and night, indicated a double tide in the column of mercury. At ten A.M., it was generally at its height, which on successive days, varied at this hour from 29.98 inches, to 30.1 inches, the barometer being suspended about eighteen feet above the sea. From five to six P.M., it had attained its lowest level, varying on successive days from 29.86 inches to 29.95. From this period it continued to rise till about midnight, when it had again obtained its maximum, and from four to five a.m. was at its minimum.

About three P. M. on the 11th of March, we came abreast of the island of Pulo Ubi, in lat. 8° 25′ N., long. 104° 50′ E., off the southern extremity of Cambodia, and cast anchor in a bay on the N.E. side of it, and prepared to land. In the same bay a Chinese junk lay at anchor.

As we approached the beach, we could observe one or two huts in a plot of tall grass, oversha-

dowed by a solitary cocoa-nut tree, and several persons walking about. Our books had stated the place to be inhabited, but the dreary appearance of the island, the stunted form of its vegetation, its steril and forbidding aspect, and above all, the total absence of every thing calculated to remind us of humanity, soon destroyed the hopes we had cherished of mingling so soon in the concerns of our fellow-creatures, and of observing society under circumstances which might be supposed to confer on it a peculiar interest. We were therefore not a little gratified to observe these traces. We were still more pleased to observe one of the inhabitants walk towards the point we were approaching, and thence concluded that they must have been in some degree accustomed to the advent of strangers. This person proved to be a slender, but healthy and active old man. He wore a blue cloak, and an ample blue turban, and had a thin, scanty, long beard. His appearance was not unlike that of an Arab. He saluted us with respect, and though none of our party could understand his language, we could easily perceive that he was not displeased with our visit. We accompanied him to his house close by, which we found to be a sort of temple. On a rude altar of wood, raised about three feet from the ground, and covered with mats, was placed a small

earthen image, of a reverend, though rather grotesque looking old man, in a contemplative attitude, his countenance not altogether destitute of a certain air of benignity and conscious innocence. He wore a long flowing beard and loose garments. On his left stood a smaller figure of more humble pretensions; probably the attendant of the former, or minister of his will. The first was different from the figure or image (Joss,) the more common object of the worship of the lower orders of Chinese.

Before them were placed various offerings of fruit, sugar and sweet-meats. The altar was tawdrily ornamented with pieces of tinsel, shreds of gilt paper, and painted silks.

Before the shrine was placed a low platform over which a mat was thrown, on which the old man invited us to sit down. In one end of the room were placed baskets of rice, a few small wax tapers, and some yams. We found that two families lived on this spot, and one or two Chinese. The latter had come for the purpose of collecting the gelatinous Fucus, agar-agar. The former had, it would appear, lived here for several years. Their subsistence had probably been chiefly obtained from Chinese mariners, to whom this lofty island affords an admirable land-mark, for which they always make in their coasting voyages. They look upon the place as peculiarly

sacred, and never pass it without offering up prayers and praises for their success in having made it. On this occasion they leave behind them a painted board, on which is written the name of their junk, the date of their arrival, the port they have left, &c. At this time several boards of this description were in the keeping of the old man.

If we were pleased with the civility and attention of our first acquaintance, we had reason to be no less so with the other members of this little community. It was altogether an interesting spectacle to see them crowd round, without the least fear or apprehension, and only anxious to shew us kindness, and to treat us with hospitality. A middle aged woman, of rather handsome appearance, after she had gratified her curiosity by a hasty glance at the strangers, made us some excellent tea, which she gave to us in small cups, in the usual manner of the Chinese. A man, about her own age, and apparently her husband, lay the wretched victim of that most distressing and horrible disease, elephantiasis. Our appearance for a moment seemed to rouse him from the moody melancholy which accompanies this complaint. Two handsome boys and a girl made up the family.

We were forcibly struck with the difference in the vegetation of this island from any that we

had hitherto seen; a difference which, as it is not easily to be accounted for by its geographical position, is more probably owing to an unusually scanty supply of moisture, and perhaps in part also to the peculiar nature of the soil, which being very thin, and not retentive of moisture, must be unfavourable. The vegetation here could scarcely be termed arborescent. It was low, scanty and bushy. The Erythrina corallodendrum was among its stoutest, and the Caryota mitis, of Loureiro, among its tallest, trees. Various species of Dioscorea were common on the sloping sides of the hills, where also the wild plantain (Musa sapientum) grew in abundance. We had the good fortune to find this splendid herbaceous plant in flower. Unlike, however, to that luscious and most delicious fruit raised by the hand of man, the fruit of the wild plantain contains scarce any pulp whatever. Its leathery sheath encloses numerous series of large black seeds, attached to a pithy central stem, and immersed in a gummy substance resembling bird-lime. It appeared by our systematic works, that the seeds of this most useful plant have been but rarely seen by botanists. Hence doubts had been expressed upon the subject. In none of the cultivated varieties are there any seeds discoverable, though at times we may observe minute black points in the pulp, disposed in longitudinal

rows. These are probably the feeble traces of seeds not yet quite extinguished by cultivation, the black perisperm being the last to disappear.

We had now, therefore, a favourable opportunity of examining this matter. The seeds were numerous, covered with a thick, black, brittle shell, and as large as those of the custard-apple, but of a more irregular shape. We collected numbers of them. There is no necessity to refer, as Willdenow does, the origin of all the cultivated varieties, and of all the species enumerated by botanists, to the Musa troglodytarum, a native of the Molucca Islands, as the parent stock. Our specimens accorded with the descriptions given of Musa sapientum. The seeds were in all respects perfect, and apparently capable of propagating the plant. Indeed its existence on these islands, so rarely frequented by man, and altogether unfit for cultivation, can be accounted for on no other principle than the fertility of the seeds. It appears, therefore, that we ought to refer to this plant the origin of the cultivated species, which are probably no other than simple varieties of it.

The Yams found on this island are remarkably large. The green tuberosities commonly found on the stem of the plant were eagerly sought after by our Chinese followers, who regard them

as a valuable medicine. The Erythrina mentioned above was now in flower, and made a handsome, shewy appearance. It was frequented by considerable numbers of a large and beautiful species of pigeon, a circumstance the more remarkable, as the birds we had hitherto seen in these latitudes were of solitary habits, few in number, and not gregarious. This bird was extremely handsome; its body was of a snow-white colour; its wings, and the extremity of its tail, tipped with black. It appeared to be about twice the size of our domestic pigeon. Though we shot one, we were not so fortunate as to procure it.

The only Palm found here was that already mentioned, the Caryota mitis, a species not enumerated in Persoon's Synopsis, nor in the Species Plantarum of Willdenow, for what reason it does not appear. It is very well described by Loureiro; and it appears to be totally different from the Caryota urens.

On the sea-coast there is a species of Pandanus extremely common. It throws up a simple stem to the height of ten feet or more, in which respect only it seems to differ from the Pandanus odoratissimus, the habit of which is to extend along the ground, throwing down straight and stout roots into the earth for its support, as it extends.

The Scævola, already mentioned, is common here as on the Malacca coast.

The form, distribution, and peculiar appearance of the land we had now made were calculated to excite our attention, particularly in relation to the contiguous continent. We were entering amidst innumerable groups of islands, composing for the most part mountain masses, and all of them much elevated. They were as various in form and dimension, as they were numerous and picturesque. They were all covered with vegetation, which, after we had passed their southern boundary, assumed a more luxuriant appearance. They each might be imagined to be the abode of an innocent, a happy, an undisturbed people. Nature, arrayed in her most attractive colours, appeared to smile upon the scene. The sea was calm and unruffled; the sky serene and unclouded. Nothing could be more deceitful than this apparent fitness for the abode of man. There seemed little reason to believe that any of them had ever been occupied. The want of a constant supply of water must ever be a principal objection, while their steep forms and scanty soil forbid every attempt at cultivation. In many, the summits of the islands are rounded, in others peaked and rugged. In fact, we here appear to have ascended the tops of a range of mountains, in structure partaking of the nature

of rocks both of the primitive and secondary kind. The direction of this partly submerged range is like that on the peninsula of Malacca, from north to south, bending a little from east to west. The breadth of the range is considerable. The islands form a continuous narrow belt extending along the coast, in this respect somewhat similar to those on the east coast of the bay of Bengal. There, however, we observe a stupendous parallel chain of mountains extending from one extremity of the peninsula to the other; whilst here the most remarkable circumstance was the extreme lowness of the continental land. It is an extensive alluvion on a level with the sea; on which we look in vain for hill or elevation of any sort. At the distance of a few miles, the trees only, and not the ground, are visible from the deck, whilst the islands, many of them rising above 1,000 feet, are to be seen many miles off.

The occurrence of granite on this, the first of the series, was rather unexpected.

This granite presents several varieties. It is less perfectly crystallized, and more granular, than that we found on the west coast of the peninsula of Malacca. Many of the specimens contain hornblende; and on the summit of the hill there is a red granite, which breaks into brick-like fragments. The lower granite is

uncommonly hard, and breaks with much difficulty.

March 13th.—We had now got amongst innumerable groups of islands, for the most part of small dimensions, all of them lofty, abrupt on their sides, and almost invariably without any level ground attached. We remarked, however, that in proportion as we advanced towards the north, the vegetation had, as has already been observed, assumed a more luxuriant appearance. Vegetable life again assumed that vigour which had so often already attracted our admiration, and the intertropical forest again displayed its unparalleled riches. This sensible improvement in the forms of vegetation is probably owing to the genial influence of a milder climate, and perhaps still more to the change which has perceptibly taken place in the geological structure of the country. But feeble traces of granite, as rolled masses, were now to be seen. This series of rock had been substituted by various others of later formation.

In the course of the day we visited two of these islands. They were each about a mile in circumference, and from 200 to 300 feet high in the centre; the first lies in lat. 9° 58′ N., and long. 104° 37′ E., about ninety-three miles from Pulo Ubi: the other lies about three miles north of the last. In the first, the lowest

rock is composed of compact feldspar, of an iron-brown colour, intersected by narrow seams of quartz. This rock is abundant along the base of the island, near to the sea-mark.

The bulk of the island appears to be composed of a compound rock, formed of clay-stone and potstone intermixed. This rock is rather soft, and its fracture resembles that of some fine grained sandstones. It occurs both on the top and towards the base of the hill.

Considerable beds of pure potstone, in a somewhat foliated form, occur in the last.

The other island is formed almost entirely of potstone, and the compound of potstone and claystone, mentioned as forming the bulk of the other island, is here comparatively in small quantity. The potstone contains imbedded small masses of clay slate.

In our excursions to-day we were so fortunate as to procure two of the pigeons seen for the first time on Pulo Ubi. They were here very numerous. Those we caught weighed about a pound each. This is to be reckoned amongst the handsomest of this handsome genus, and if ever domesticated, must prove a valuable acquisition to our aviaries.

March 14.—Arrived at Fu-kok or Pau-kok, a large island, a little to the north of the river of Can-cau. We cast anchor in an open road-

stead, nearly off the middle of the island, in lat. 10° 17′ N., and long. 104° 16′ E. This and several other islands in the neighbourhood attain a considerable altitude towards the centre, where the hills, disposed in ridges running north and south, appear upwards of 2,000 feet in height. The eminences are continuous and gently undulating, rarely abrupt in their forms, or exposing much rocky surface. The island is everywhere covered with the thickest woods. We had no where seen more luxuriant vegetation than this place afforded.

Both on the preceding night and this morning, we observed a number of Praus sailing along the shores, but none of them could be enticed to come alongside. It was imagined that they had been unaccustomed to see a ship, and we afterwards learnt that our conjecture was correct. In the course of the morning, a prau, after repeated solicitations, came so near as to speak to us, but the people would not come on board. Some time after this a native accompanied one of the ship's officers on board, and was followed by his prau. From this man, who spoke the language of Cochin China, we learned that the place was partly inhabited, and that at certain periods of the year, Cochin Chinese and Chinese fishermen came hither for the pur-

pose of pursuing their calling; the latter chiefly for the purpose of collecting trepang, a black species of Holothuria. Though the spoken language of the people who now visited us was unknown to our Chinese followers, yet by having recourse to the use of a common character, to which the same ideas are attached, they were enabled to communicate with each other. This was the character commonly used by the Chinese, which they write by distinct letters, in straight lines from top to bottom. We thus learned that the island belonged to the king of Cochin-China, and that its most valuable production was Agila wood, the aquillaria agallocha, Roxb. (Aloxylum agallochium, Lour.) The fair promises of our vivacious and semibarbarous visitor excited hopes which were not destined to be realized. After the most particular inquiry, and the offer of considerable rewards for specimens of the fresh plant, we were reluctantly compelled to give up the search. It appeared that this wood is a royal monopoly, and that even to point it out to strangers is a crime never to be forgiven. In the course of the forenoon, we landed in two parties, followed at some distance by the native prau. The approach is over an extensive shallow bank, on which we observed great numbers of Asteriæ,

Medusæ, Echini, and some corals. On the fishing stakes, in front of the village, we shot two sea-fowl of the genus Sterna.

On reaching the shore, about six or seven men, armed with spears, came down from the village, used threatening attitudes towards the party in the first boat, and appeared desirous of opposing our landing. Capt. M'Donnel, however, leaving his arms behind, leapt on shore, and went up to them with the greatest confidence, shewing them at the same time that he had no hostile intention towards them. Astonished at his boldness, or doubting of their own valour, they immediately changed their line of conduct, and appeared to welcome him with sincerity.

We were the less surprised at this inhospitable reception, on learning that the persons in question were not inhabitants of the island, but natives of China, who having enjoyed here a profitable fishing, without interruption, had their jealousy awakened by the appearance of strangers. Their accustomed insolence towards Europeans was visible even here. The Chinese now seemed anxious only to derive advantage from our visit; they followed us everywhere, and promised largely. We had soon reason to regret that we had made their acquaintance, for the Cochin-Chinese, who were remarkably civil

and polite to us, seemed to be somewhat jealous of our attention towards the former, and kept themselves at a greater distance than at first. As we passed through their village, they invited us to enter their houses, and spread a mat for us to sit upon. Like all other Asiatics, they seat themselves on the floor, or recline on cushions while they converse. They offered us betel, and gave us pipes to smoke tobacco. It did not appear that they had tea amongst them. They were good-natured and polite; examined us very attentively, were much amused with our watches, laughing immoderately when they were held up to their ear. They had abundance of Agila wood in their houses, of which they offered us some. The coarser parts of this wood they beat up in a mortar till it has attained the consistence of saw-dust. This dust is then made into a paste with which they cover small reeds. The party had great quantities of these reeds in their possession. They are used by the Chinese, chiefly for sacred purposes, being placed before the images of their idols, on account of the perfume they give out when lighted. They burn with a slow smothered flame, somewhat like that of tinder. These reeds are known in English by the appellation of Joss sticks. Yet we looked in vain for any image of this deity. Here and there, however, in front of their houses.

small wooden cells, raised on poles, were to be seen, which cells were abundantly provided with Joss sticks.

The island of Fu-kok is of very considerable extent, situated in a mild and equable climate, at no great distance from the mouth of the river Can-cau, and surrounded by numerous islands which shelter it from storms in either monsoon. The height of its mountains is such as to attract a constant supply of moisture, and the soil would appear to be of good quality, probably formed from a base of decomposed clay-slate; though this is mere conjecture, as we were not so fortunate as to discover a single point of rock, or even a stone, during our visit. Hence the vegetation of this island is extremely rich and luxuriant, and its general appearance exceedingly beautiful. Were it not for the extreme scantiness of low, or rather level, land, it would be reckoned admirably calculated for the habitation of man.

It is nearly of a triangular form, and broadest towards the northern extremity. Its utmost length is thirty-four miles, and its greatest breadth sixteen miles. The most southern point lies in lat. 9° 58′ N., and long. 104° 14′ E.

There are villages on several parts of the coast, and some of them are said to be populous.

That which we visited might consist of about twenty families, who appeared to live comfortably, and in a friendly, social, and peaceable manner. The men were of a stout, but short make, intelligent, and rather good looking. Their houses were constructed on poles, and covered on the roof and sides with a thick, coarse bark, which split into numerous layers. They were raised about three feet from the ground. We saw but few signs of cultivation, and those only of recent date. The cocoa-nut and the plantain appeared to have been planted but a very short time, yet were thriving with great luxuriance. A small garden was attached to most of the habitations, in which onions and culinary herbs were cultivated. The island abounds in wild hogs, and we observed skins of the Rusa. Shell fish is abundant; and considerable quantities of Holothuria were drying in the sun. For a dollar, I purchased from a native, two dried skins of a very singular species of Ray. We shot five species of birds in the woods. For the plants which we found, I refer to the catalogue. Amongst them will be found a species of Mr. Brown's new genus Haya, natural order Asclepiadeæ. The species is probably also new. It is extremely elegant. It grows on bare rocks, or climbs on trees, in thick, convoluted patches. The

leaves are thick and fleshy, and the whole plant abounds in an acrid milky juice. We here procured specimens of the Casuarina equisetifolia, in flower. The tree is common along the beach here as well as on the west coast of the peninsula of Malacca. It is a very tall, handsome tree, somewhat resembling our pine. The wood is remarkably hard, yet the tree grows with great rapidity. All the trees here were Dioeceous; and this seems to be the true habit of this plant. It ought therefore to be removed to that class.

Towards evening we got into our boats, intending to visit a point of land which promised to afford us specimens of rock, but we found that we were not able to reach it, especially as we were at a great distance from the ship, and were threatened with a storm.

On the following morning we sailed round the island, and thus ascertained the dimensions stated above.

We continued to proceed northwards among innumerable islands, many of which, by their position with regard to each other, would seem to form extensive bays and well-sheltered harbours. The tides in some places are very strong and irregular. They rise to a very uncommon height for these latitudes. In some places the

sea was observed to be not less than fifteen feet below high water-mark.

On the following day we landed on several small, rocky islands, off the southern extremity of Fu-kok. We found them composed of huge masses of sandstone. The surface of this sandstone was hollowed out into numerous shallow cavities; it presented considerable varieties in granular aspect and contained nodules of flint, quartz, &c.

We had been much exposed to a powerful sun during this day, the bad effect of which I soon after was destined to experience, having been laid up for some days with fever, which rendered me totally incapable of attending to any thing. We continued our course through the islands, sometimes keeping to the windward of them altogether, and at other times passing through narrow straits, with fine deep passages between the islands. Nothing could be more picturesque than the prospect which these islands afforded on such occasions. Mr. Crawfurd went on shore on one of them, and brought off specimens of granite and quartz-rock, of which it was entirely composed. The islands, however, immediately near to this were composed of variegated sand-stone.

On the 21*st* of *March*, about sun-set, some

Chinese junks were seen riding at anchor in the harbour of Siam, and there, the same evening, we cast anchor. On the *22d*, the pilot of a Chinese junk came on board, and represented that it would be necessary to send to Packnam, a village at the mouth of the river, for a pilot; he was doubtful whether the ship could pass the bar. The chief mate set out for this place in the morning, with a letter from Mr. Crawfurd for the chief person of the place. He was hospitably entertained during the night by the chief, and returned on the following day, with a small present of fruit from him, but no letter. In the meanwhile they had referred to Bankok, and a pilot was ordered to attend us.

25th.—We weighed anchor, with a light, fair wind, and attempted to pass the bar, but stuck on a bank of mud, after clearing the principal bar, which is of sand. Here the ship lay quite easy and upright, supported on one side by props till next tide. At low water there were but six feet on the bar. About 5 p.m. the ship begun to float again, and after touching now and then, got over without much difficulty as the tide made. The entrance is tolerably well marked out by lines of fishing-stakes. The mouth of the river forms an angle with the entrance from the harbour, so that the former is not perceptible until you are close to it. The river gradually

opens upon the view; it is called Menâm: it is about a mile and a half in breadth at its mouth. After passing two or three short reaches, we anchored opposite to the town of Packnam. The river is here about three-quarters of a mile in breadth, and very deep; the banks are low, and covered with woods.

CHAPTER III.

Interpreter arrives.—Requested to land the Guns.—Entertained by a Chief.—Physiological Remarks on the Siamese.—Progress to Bankok.—A floating Bazar.—Bankok described.—The Governor General's Letter to the King delivered to a Chief.—A suspicious Attempt made to get Possession of the Presents.—Interview with one of the Ministers.—Disgusting Servility of his Attendants.—Negotiations respecting the Performance of the Court Ceremonies.—Proceed to the Palace.—Addressed in good Latin by a Native.—Observations on the Road to the Audience.—Description of the Audience.

March 26th.—Early in the morning, a man, dressed somewhat in the style of an European sailor, came off, and stated that he had been sent from Bankok to act as interpreter, and to accompany us to the capital. This was one of that degraded, but self-important class of society, well known in India under the general title of Portuguese, a title to which a hat and one or two other articles of clothing in the European fashion would seem to give every black man, every native, and every half caste, an undisputed claim. Our visitor bore the characteristic national features of the Siamese, amongst whom he had been born; he spoke the Portuguese language with ease and fluency, but English very imperfectly. He said,

that the chief of Packnam requested, that the guns might be landed, as the ship could not otherwise be permitted to proceed upwards without an order from court to that effect. It was observed, that the Portuguese frigate did not land her guns; he replied, that such was a special indulgence from the court. Mr. Crawfurd was, at the same time, invited on shore to dinner, the chief representing that he had received orders to entertain all persons of the rank of ambassadors or envoys during their stay within his jurisdiction. Very little notice was taken of, and no direct communication was held with, the interpreter.

This sort of verbal communication, on matters of business, did not augur well towards the success of our mission. We could not fail to remark, that the different personages who had as yet visited us, were either of very low rank, or of none at all, neither did they exhibit any mark by which they might be recognised as acting from authority. The chief, or, as the gentlemen of our party styled him, governor of Packnam, himself, to all appearance, of small political importance, being merely the head man of several poor fishing villages, did not condescend to visit us, or to hold other communication with us than that described. It was hinted that a man of some rank had been sent hither to receive us,

but neither did this personage make his appearance. After breakfast, Captain M'Donnell went on shore to wait upon the chief of Packnam; he induced the latter to send a young man, a relation of his, on board. This man was received with much attention; he appeared to take little notice of the ship, or, indeed, of any thing else; he was naked from the waist upwards, and rather meanly dressed even for a Siamese; he partook of sweetmeats and spirits, and after inviting Mr. Crawfurd to go on shore, and conversing with the latter for about half an hour, he rose and departed, Mr. Crawfurd having agreed to visit the chief in the evening.

We accordingly set out in three different boats, Mr. Crawfurd and Captain Dangerfield having their servants, harkaras, silver sticks, state umbrellas, and dressed in the uniform of the Governor-General. A crowd of people, consisting of old men and women, and many children, were collected on the beach, and appeared to view us with considerable curiosity. The young man who had visited us on board, alone received us at the landing-place, from whence we walked through a narrow noisome lane, paved with wood, the distance of about fifty yards, to the chief's house, a place of sorry appearance; we ascended by a flight of wooden steps into a small enclosed court, which opened behind into the house. In an open

room, tawdrily ornamented with Chinese paper lanterns, Dutch glass, and scraps of painted paper, we found the chief, a tall, slender, rather elderly man, seated on a chair; he got up to welcome Mr. Crawfurd, and conducted him to a chair on his left. A table was placed in the centre of the room, and soon after we had taken our seats (we were luckily accommodated with chairs), a dinner, consisting of roast pork, roast ducks and fowls, and a pilaw, were brought in. The dishes were cooked after the European fashion, two or three native Christians who attended, to judge by their busy manner, being very anxious to approve themselves on the present occasion. We had dined before going on shore, but at the request of the chief, who, indeed, appeared to be very desirous of pleasing us, we sat down to table, accompanied by the interpreter already alluded to, but neither the chief nor any of his family partook of the entertainment. A crowd of people were collected in the court, and viewed us as we sat, evidently with considerable interest. Opposite to the chief sat the personage who had been sent to receive us; he was a good-looking, middle-aged man, a Malay, who had been once or twice in Bengal: we spent nearly two hours thus conversing on various subjects. On our getting up to depart, the chief rose and shook hands with all of us.

March 27.—No communication had arrived respecting permission for us to proceed to the capital. One of the king's boats, which had been sent down for the purpose of taking Mr. Crawfurd to Bankok, returned this morning. This was a long and narrow boat, turned up at the bow and stern, bearing resemblance to a canoe, and provided with a sort of chair in the middle, over which a shed of mats had been erected. The rowers were numerous, but the accommodation trifling, as it could carry but one or two persons. It appeared not a little absurd that they should think of offering only this boat for the accommodation of a numerous party. It was doubtless expected that Mr. Crawfurd would go up alone.

Accompanied by Mr. Rutherford, I went on shore in the evening, and strolled through the village. We found it difficult to land, it being now low water, and the banks consisting of soft mud. We ascended into a house built, as a great proportion of the village is, over the river. We passed thus from house to house, on elevated boards, till we reached dry land. We found the people remarkably civil, and even obliging. They received us with smiles, and seemed anxious to entertain us. The women were not less forward than the men on these occasions. They collected round us, talked, laughed, and expressed not the least apprehension. We found the

houses dirty, and lumbered with billets of wood, with little provision for ease. Yet the people appeared to live in tolerable comfort, though their means of subsistence, if we except that which they derive from the river and the sea, was not very evident. There appeared a great paucity even of fish. Rice they seemed to have in abundance. They were well fed, and stout, but rather below the middle stature. They cut the hair close to the head, leaving a short tuft on the forehead, which they comb backward. There is no difference in this respect between the men and women, both cutting the hair off short. Europeans are not more attentive to render their teeth white, than the Siamese are to make them black. Amongst them black teeth only are considered beautiful, and it must be allowed that they succeed perfectly well in this species of ornament. This, together with the coarse red painting of the mouth and lips, which they derive from the constant eating of betel, catechu, and lime together, gives to them a disgusting appearance. The face of the Siamese is remarkably large, the forehead very broad, prominent on each side, and covered with the hairy scalp in greater proportion than I have observed in any other people. In some, it descends to within an inch or even less of the eye-brows, covers the whole of the temples, and stretches

forwards to within nearly the same distance of the outer angle of the eye. The cheek bones are large, wide, and prominent. A principal peculiarity in the configuration of their countenance is the great size of the back part of the lower jaw. The corona process here projects outwards, so as to give to this part of the face an uncommon breadth. One would imagine, on a careless inspection, that they were all affected with a slight degree of *goitre*, or swelling of the parotid gland. A similar appearance is often observable in Malays. The people generally go naked from the waist upwards, sometimes throwing a piece of cloth over the shoulders. Old women in general expose the breast; but the young, and the middle aged, wrap a short piece of cloth round the chest, of sufficient length to form a single knot in front, thus leaving the shoulders and arms bare. From the loins to the knee, they wrap a piece of blue or other coloured cloth, over which the better sort wear a piece of Chinese crape, or a shawl.

The bazar, if a few scattered huts along a path may deserve that name, was extremely meagre. A few plantains, pumpkins, betel, tobacco, and jagory, were almost the only articles it afforded, by the sale of which a few old women contrived to gain a subsistence.

We proceeded to a monastic institution,

situated on the bank of the river. The houses here are well built, spacious, and convenient. The whole is included in an extensive and open space of ground, kept clean and neat. The accommodation for the priests is excellent; the houses are well raised, the floors and walls made of boards. A neat temple occupies one extremity of the enclosure. The fraternity received us with great cheerfulness, and, at our request, readily admitted us into the interior of the temple. Here, raised to about the middle height of the edifice, on a broad platform or altar, we discovered about fifty gilded images of Buddha, all in the sitting posture. The principal image, considerably above the human stature, was placed behind, and over him was raised a sort of arched canopy of carved and gilded wood. The others were ranged close before him. On each corner of the altar, with their faces turned towards the images, clothed in the usual costume of their order, and in the attitude of devotion, stood two priests. The general form of the figure of Buddha was not essentially different from that worshipped by the natives of Ceylon. The hair is short and curled, the head surmounted by a flame or glory, the countenance placid, benign, and contemplative. They have given somewhat of a Siamese, or rather Tartar expression to the features, by rather

prolonging the eyebrows, and giving an obliquity to the eye; the nose is more sharp, and the lips very thick.

The Buddha of the natives of Ceylon, on the contrary, is a complete model of the ancient Egyptian or Ethiopian countenance, from which their images never deviate in the slightest degree. There can be no question, however, that both nations intend to represent one and the same personage.

Nearly in the centre of this enclosure, a temporary building, of a pyramidal form, and constituted of successive stages, was then building. We were informed that this was intended to contain the funeral pile on which the body of a chief, who had died about five months before, was to be burnt in the course of another month; it being customary, amongst Siamese of rank, to preserve the bodies of their relations in their houses for a greater or shorter period, according to the rank of the deceased. Great preparations were now making for the approaching ceremony, and, in a building close by, we found some priests at work, painting devices for the occasion. These were principally grotesque figures of old men, monsters, serpents, &c.

In the course of the evening, we called upon the relative of the late chief. He seemed well pleased at our taking notice of the preparations

that were going forward, and still more when I expressed a desire to see the body, which lay in one end of the room, behind a white screen. He immediately led us to the place, cast the screen aside, and exhibited an oblong box, covered with white muslin, and ornamented with green-coloured and gold-leaf fringe.

We proceeded along the bank for nearly two miles, on a paved path-way; the ground here being low and swampy. This village rarely exhibits more than two or three houses in depth from the river; yet, extending in a continuous line for several miles, the population must be very considerable. We passed several other handsome temples. It should be observed, that at the monastic institution mentioned above, there is a battery facing the river, but it cannot be said to command it. Here there are ten or twelve iron guns, mounted on decayed carriages, half sunk into the earth, and at present unserviceable.

March 28*th*.—The boat which had gone the day before returned during the night, and we now saw it in its usual place. The Malay, whom we had met at the house of the chief, and who had been sent to meet us, returned in it. He came on board in the course of the morning, and stated that the ship might proceed up the river, without delay or restriction of any sort. The anchor

was accordingly immediately weighed, and though the tide was against us, we proceeded up with an easy breeze. The banks of the river were still very low; they were thickly planted with the *attap*, which gave them a picturesque appearance; in the background we observed the betel palm to grow in great abundance, and to appearance spontaneously, the ground being too low to admit of cultivation. Besides these, the jungle consisted of various species of Calamus, and of bamboo, and long grass. Proceeding farther up the river, extensive plains opened in prospect. They presented rather a steril aspect, the harvest having been lately gathered in. These plains occupy the left bank of the river, over which they were now elevated about eight or ten feet. We were given to understand, that in the rainy season they are covered with water, to the depth of two or three feet, and are therefore well adapted for the cultivation of rice. They appeared to extend as far as the eye could reach. Between them and the river, there is a narrow strip of jungle. Houses are interspersed along the bank, and surrounded by extensive plantations of areca palms, plantains, and a few cocoa-nut trees. The houses are small, but neat, consisting of one or two rooms, raised about three feet from the ground. The opposite side of the river is covered with jungle. The

banks are tolerably steep, with very deep water, from thirty to sixty feet near to their edge. The mud is stiff, plastic, forming, in all probability, an excellent soil. The gentlemen of our party went on shore in the evening, as we lay at anchor, waiting the turn of tide. They shot several species of birds, amongst which were a beautiful Pigeon, a Minor, and the blue Jay of Bengal.

We saw the Adjutant, and several species of Falco flying about.

About sun-set, we again weighed anchor, and continued to proceed up the river till about midnight. We now began to be much molested with musquitoes.

March 29th.—We recommenced proceeding up the river at an early hour, and about 8 A.M. cast anchor nearly opposite to the middle of the town.

In the course of our progress this morning, the various scenes upon the river afforded considerable interest. Numerous small canoes, for the most part carrying but one individual, small covered boats, &c., were plying in every direction. The market-hour was now approaching, and all seemed life and activity. Here one or more of the priests of Buddha were guiding their little canoe on its diurnal eleemosynary excursion. There an old woman hawked betel, plantains, and pumpkins. Here you saw canoes

laden with cocoa-nuts,—there, groups of natives were proceeding from house to house, on their various occupations. But the most singular feature in the busy scene was the appearance of the houses, floating on the water, in rows about eight, ten, or more, in depth, from the bank. This novel appearance was peculiarly neat and striking. The houses were built of boards, of a neat oblong form, and towards the river provided with a covered platform, on which were displayed numerous articles of merchandise: fruit, rice, meat, &c. This was, in fact, a floating bazar, in which all the various products of China and of the country were exposed for sale. At either end the houses were bound to long bamboos driven into the river. They are thus enabled to move from place to place according as convenience may demand. Every house is furnished with a small canoe, in which they visit, and go from place to place to transact business. Almost all those collected in this quarter seem to be occupied by merchants, many of them very petty no doubt, and by tradespeople, as shoe-makers, tailors, &c. The latter occupations are followed almost exclusively by the Chinese. The houses are in general very small, consisting of a principal centre room, and one or two small ones, the centre being open in front, for the display of their wares. The houses are from twenty to

thirty feet in length, and about half that space in breadth. They consist of a single stage, the floor raised above the water about a foot, and the roof thatched with palm leaves. At low water, when the stream is rapid, there appears to be but little business done in these shops. Their proprietors are then to be seen lolling or sleeping in front of their warehouses, or otherwise enjoying themselves at their ease. At all hours of the day, however, many boats are passing and repassing. They are so light and sharp in their form, that they mount rapidly against the stream. They are rowed with paddles, of which the long canoes have often eight or ten on each side. The number of Chinese appears to be very considerable; they display the same activity and industry here that they do wherever they are to be found. Their boats are generally larger, and rowed by longer paddles. They have a sort of cabin, made of basket-work, in the centre, which serves to contain their effects, and answers the purposes of a house. Many of them carry pieces of fresh pork up and down the river for sale.

The river at Bankok is about a quarter of a mile in breadth, without including the space occupied on each side by floating houses. It carries down a large body of water, and contains a large proportion of soft mud; its depth, even close to the bank, generally varies from six to

ten fathoms, whilst its rapidity is about three miles an hour. As far as we could yet judge, not having been on shore, we suspected that by far the greater part of the population lived on the water, in floating houses, moveable from place to place. The inconveniences of a city built in this manner must be numerous. The houses are small, the accommodations trifling, and the occupants must be ever on their guard against accidents. A trifling population must in this way occupy a vast extent of ground. You look in vain for any thing better than a small, low hut, of one stage only in height. These little houses, or huts, it is true, are generally handsome and neat, but they make, on the whole, a paltry, though to us a novel, appearance. Their form is chiefly Chinese, as is also that of their temples.

In the course of the day, two children, about six years old, the son and nephew of the minister who conducts all the business carried on between the court and Europeans of every description, came on board to see the ship, bringing with them a present, consisting of sweetmeats and fruits. They were neatly dressed, from the waist downwards, and had their bodies slightly rubbed over with a yellowish colour, either turmeric or powdered sandal wood. They wore round the neck several ornaments of gold

and precious stones, none of them of much value. Each had a long necklace of moon-stones set in gold thrown over the shoulder, and suspended from the neck a large, broad, golden ornament, studded with diamonds, sapphires, and rubies, all of inferior quality and of trifling value. Like all Indian children, they shewed a wonderful precocity of manners, conducting themselves with the greatest ease and propriety.

In the evening we were visited by a man of rank, second to the minister alluded to. He was an old, lively, and inquisitive man, upwards of sixty-five years of age. He came in one of the king's boats, which was rowed by men dressed in coarse scarlet cloth.

This old gentleman conversed for some time with great ease and affability, inquired into the respective rank and occupation of the several gentlemen of the mission, and seemed to welcome us with great cordiality. He soon intimated that the object of his visit was to procure the letter from the Governor-General to the King. He had brought with him a handsome golden cup for its reception. On this, the letter, wrapt in gold tissue, was placed in his presence. On his expressing a wish to depart, Mr. Crawfurd took up the cup, and raising it to his head, proceeded through a double line of sepoys, with presented arms, drawn out for the occasion, to

the gangway, from which he handed it down to one of the gentlemen of the mission placed in the chief's boat to receive it. The latter delivered it to the chief, who placed it negligently on a piece of old carpet, on which he sat.

March 30th.—The Portuguese, who continued to visit us from time to time, brought a message from the minister Peea-Suri-Wong-Montree, to the effect, that he would be happy to accommodate the mission with a house during their stay at Bankok. The offer was accepted, and, at the request of Mr. Crawfurd, Captain Macdonald went on shore to examine the house. His report was far from flattering to our expectations. The building, which appeared to be an out-house, intended for a store-room, contained but four small, ill-ventilated rooms, the approach to which led through a trap-door from below, and on three sides they were almost entirely excluded from fresh air. There was not a single out-house for the accommodation of a numerous train of followers. The place was besides completely shut out from the court, and the open space occupied by the chief himself, whose accommodations appeared to be abundantly ample and comfortable. A list of the persons forming the suite of the Agent of the Governor-General had been transmitted to the minister at an early period after

our arrival, by which he must have been convinced that the house he had allotted was totally inadequate for the accommodation of the party. Besides, the manner in which it had been granted, was calculated to awaken suspicion that he either wished to have the mission entirely at his own disposal, excluding every one else from visiting us, and be enabled to keep the strictest watch over our conduct, or that he wished to degrade it, by affecting to regard it as of but little importance. The latter inference appeared the more probable, from the circumstance of his own accommodations being abundantly respectable and ample, and yet the number of his retainers did not appear to equal that of our followers. With Asiatics, as with other nations, it is the custom for the government to provide accommodation for persons sent on the public service from one court to another, in an official capacity.

In the present instance, it was conferred by an individual, in a very inadequate manner, and as a matter of favour and of indulgence on his part. It should be observed, however, that the number of houses built of brick and mortar, and roofed with tiles, is here very scanty; and, although the house allotted for the use of the mission was in all respects inferior to those oc-

cupied by the chief, yet it is possible that they may have considered it as admirably adapted for the purpose.

No person of rank had yet waited on the Agent to the Governor General, and all communication with the minister was carried on through the Malay so often alluded to, a man to all appearance of low rank, cunning, suspicious, and artful in the highest degree. He could be looked upon only in the light of a vigilant spy, supple, fawning, and familiar, yet ready to take advantage of every expression, and of every act of our conduct, nor were the most trifling and indifferent matters beyond his notice; and, on one occasion, when a young gentleman on board, not connected with the mission, went to visit the Portuguese Consul, this man meanly traced his steps, and followed him into the house. His character was besides publicly spoken of as being little short of infamous; and, on more than one occasion, he had been treated by the captains of American and European ships with a degree of harshness and rigour which no man possessed of the least degree of feeling or of credit could have possibly submitted to. His particular duty is to superintend the conduct of the Malays who frequent this port. I may observe of this man, that he appeared to be about forty-five years of age. He was tall, active, and

rather thin. In appearance, he was not to be distinguished from that sect of Mohammedans so numerous on the coast of Coromandel, Malabar, and Ceylon, and usually known under the general and indefinite appellation of *Moormen*. The sect is called Mopla. They are, for the most part, petty traders, and are generally to be seen hawking their wares about the houses of Europeans. They shave the head, and wear on its crown a small white cap. This man always wore such a cap: the upper part of his body was naked: round the loins he wore a piece of coarse cloth, turned up between the legs, and, at times, a coarse shawl. Such were the accomplishments, and such the appearance of Kochai-Sahac, a man whom it was scarce possible to look upon without distrust.

The ship had not yet been secured, before a message was brought by this man to demand the presents for the king. A list of the articles had been demanded, and forwarded as soon as we entered the mouth of the river. Their first object was to procure an English horse, originally intended as a present for the king of Cochin China. It would seem that they were much pleased with this gift, and indeed they were struck with astonishment at the great value of the presents in general, and hence they could but ill conceal their joy on the occasion, and

that they had been little accustomed to receive gifts of such value. Unlike the more civilized states of further India, the Siamese court, in the urgency and frequency of its demands, betrayed a degree of meanness and avidity in this matter at once disgusting and disgraceful. For several successive days, there was no end to their importunities. The most valuable, as well as the most trifling articles, were taken away without the least ceremony, and intrusted to the Moorman and a few common labourers. In the course of the day, a mean-looking person came on board, saying, that he was desired to take away the presents. The circumstance appeared suspicious. He was told that he could not have them, on which he went away apparently quite satisfied. It is probable that this man had been sent by the prince, or some other person of rank, to pry into the affair, as the Moorman asserted that he was unauthorized to make any such demand. The articles, as they came up, with the exception of the horse, consisting of superfine cloth, English shawls, muslins, glass ware, muskets, and a small barouche, were taken to the minister's house, where they underwent a severe scrutiny.

The Portuguese consul at this place now sent a person in his suite to wait upon the Agent of the Governor General. He spoke French with

tolerable accuracy, and excused the consul from not coming in person, alleging as the reason, that the court would look upon such a visit in an unfavourable light, on account of our not having as yet paid a visit to the king; but that ceremony over, he would have the pleasure of calling.

On wishing to go on the river in the evening, we learnt the disagreeable intelligence that we were to be prisoners, and restricted from intercourse with the people until the ceremony of our introduction should be over. The only latitude we could aspire to was to pass from the ship to the house on shore occupied by the Agent of the British government, at the distance of a few yards only. This circumstance was the more irksome, from the day of our intended introduction having been put off for another week, and it was rendered the more disagreeable by the inadequate accommodation they had assigned to the mission. They seemed anxious only to procure presents, and presents in any shape were eagerly snatched at. They shewed none of those little attentions so pleasing to strangers, and understood by every people who have made the least progress in civilization. Their conduct in this respect formed a striking and unfavourable contrast with that of the Barman people towards Colonel Symes on a similar occasion. Neither

fruit nor any other refreshment was offered to us; nor was the assistance of labourers to be procured even when solicited. It was mysteriously hinted that the king would provide our people with food during our stay, but no such offer was ever tendered. The conduct of the court was that of marked neglect, which, in a people notoriously guided by ceremony and form, could only be attributed to design, and in no degree to ignorance. Their conduct neither amounted to personal insult, nor to ostensible contempt; and it is perfectly evident that they entertained proper sentiments of respect for our government, and an ill-concealed dread of its well-known power, from which we might have inferred that they would make no difficulty in granting whatever such a government would deign to ask.

In the evening a message was brought by the Malay, to say that the minister would be glad to see Mr. Crawfurd. Accompanied by Captain Dangerfield, he accordingly made him a visit. He received them in a large and lofty hall, open on one side, spread with carpets, and hung with glass lights and Chinese lanterns. They took their seats on carpets spread for the purpose, and were entertained with tea, fruit, and Chinese preserves. It would appear that the conversation was of a general nature, and rather formal. They were well-pleased with the attention of the

chief, and spoke favourably of their reception. He offered to make what alterations were deemed necessary to fit the house for our convenience, an offer which he subsequently bore little in remembrance. The servility which the attendants of this man observed towards him, appears to have been quite disgusting, and altogether degrading to humanity. During the whole of the visit they lay prostrate on the earth before him, and at a distance. When addressed, they did not dare to cast their eyes towards him, but raising the head a little, and touching the forehead with both hands united in the manner by which we would express the most earnest supplication, their looks still directed to the ground, they whispered an answer in the most humiliating tone. The manner in which he was approached by the servants of his household was even still more revolting to nature. When refreshments were ordered, they crawled forward on all fours, supported on the elbow and toes, the body being dragged on the ground. In this manner they pushed the dishes before them from time to time, in the best manner that their constrained and beast-like attitude would admit, until they had put them into their place, when they retreated backwards in the same grovelling manner, but without turning round.

How abominable! how revolting this assump-

tion of despotic power! that would vainly assimilate a weak and frail mortal to the Deity, and that could trample under its feet not only the body, degrading it to the condition of the brute beasts of the field, but even the mind of man, and render servility perpetual!

Yet this haughty chief was himself but a minister of the fifth order in importance, doomed to take his turn of beast-like grovelling, as was subsequently exhibited on visiting Chroma-chit, son to the king. Every man here is doomed to crawl on the earth before his superior. The nation must be considered as entirely the slaves of the king, of whose lives, as well as property, he can dispose at will.

> Masters' commands come with a power resistless,
> To such as owe them absolute subjection.

A few days after this Mr. Crawfurd, accompanied by Lieutenant Rutherfurd, visited the Prince Chroma-chit, an illegitimate son of the reigning king. The hour appointed was about eight o'clock in the evening.

He was seated in the middle of a spacious hall, ornamented chiefly in the Chinese style. Common looking-glasses, Dutch glass, shades, lamps, and Chinese lanterns adorned the walls and were suspended from the ceiling. The prince received them sitting, and on their entrance pointed to carpets placed at a distance

for the visitors to sit upon. Like most other Siamese men of rank, the prince is uncommonly stout, and rather bloated with fat. His form is unwieldy and coarse, his manner grave and unbending, and his general appearance that of being much older than he really is. The conversation, as reported by Mr. Rutherford, turned upon the usual topics of public visits at Asiatic courts; such as the length of our voyage, the age of the visitors, their ordinary employments; the health of the Governor General of India; the state of England, and so forth. After some time, boxes containing betel and tobacco sprouts were offered; and afterwards sweetmeats in profusion were introduced.

It is always the custom at this court to visit the prince, previously to visiting the king. Almost all matters of government, in whatever department, are in the hands of this prince, who is considered to have shewn genius and talent equal to the great charge with which he is intrusted. All matters relating to peace or war, to foreign intercourse, or to domestic regulations, to affairs of religion, of policy or of justice, are equally at his disposal, and rarely referred to the king, but for the purpose of gaining his final consent. The inferior agents of government are entirely under his control, and have no power to do any thing of themselves without first obtaining his

opinion, for which purpose they generally wait upon him twice a-day. He, at this interview, as did the king afterwards on the occasion of our introduction to him, signified that Suri Wong Montree *, the chief who had accommodated the party with a house, would make known to him the objects of their mission, and at the same time expressed his authoritative expectation that this chief was attentive to our wants.

The submission of the attendants was on this occasion even more marked than that observed towards Suri Wong, who was himself now amongst the number strewed on the ground in humble obeisance towards their prince. The latter conversed through the medium of the Malay, or rather Moorman, by which name I shall call him in future, who was on this occasion assisted by another personage of the same description, who spoke the Hindustani with tolerable accuracy. The two Malay interpreters of the Agent of the Governor General were not permitted to be present.

It is customary amongst the Siamese to send home after the visitors the sweetmeats which had been brought forward during the visit, as it is also to place on the floor before them the presents

* Surya Vangsa Mantri: this title is Sanskrit, signifying counsellor of the lineage of the sun.

they had made. This was done by Suri Wong, and by this prince, and again was this ceremony observed when we were introduced to the king, though in the latter case the most insignificant only of the presents from the Governor General of Bengal were introduced, and these were so laid out as to make the least possible display.

Numerous were the proposals, and more numerous the reports brought from day to-day respecting the ceremonies to be performed by us on being presented at court. Many conferences had taken place between Mr. Crawfurd and the Moorman on the important topic, and matters were referred by the latter to the chief, Suri Wong. What the nature of these conferences were I am altogether ignorant, not having been present at them; and, indeed, as I do not understand Malayan, the language in which they were carried on, my presence was the less necessary. It was to be feared, however, that the cunning Moorman would exert every means in his power, and leave nothing untried to induce compliance on the part of the Agent of the Governor General, with all the ceremonies prescribed by the Siamese court, of whose moderation, in matters of this nature, we might in some degree judge, by the haughty demeanour of the few chiefs we had yet seen. It was, therefore, alike

the interest, as it was the undisguised intention of the Moorman to claim merit with his employers in proportion to his success in the present matter. He commenced by introducing the question in the most artful and clever manner, boldly asserting that a report had gone abroad to the effect that the public Envoy of the Government of Bengal meant to act in a disrespectful manner towards the King of Siam—that it was his intention, throwing his arms impudently behind his back, to stand before the king without shewing any mark of respect whatever. Mr. Crawfurd replied, that so far from this being the case, he had come to do honour to the King of Siam before his subjects, and then mentioned what ceremonies he was willing to perform. With this assurance the Moorman was said to have gone away contented.

Another matter, which appears to have created much discussion and frequent reference, regarded the manner in which the members of the mission should proceed to the place of audience. It was first proposed, that after proceeding to the usual landing-place in boats, they should thence continue on foot to the audience hall. This proposal was given up for that of going on horseback, and this last finally to that of being carried in palanquins.

Matters were at length settled, and we were given to understand that we were to proceed to the palace at an early hour on the following day.

I accompanied Mr. Crawfurd on an early visit to the Barkalan, Suri Wong Montree. On this occasion he was seated on a piece of red carpet, and leaned on a velvet cushion; he rose up as we entered, and pointed to a mattress covered with chintz, placed near to the door for us to sit on. His manner appeared to me to be stiff, haughty, assuming, and altogether without dignity to support it. The conversation between him and Mr. Crawfurd lasted nearly half an hour, and turned chiefly on commercial matters. He stated that the country could furnish annually 50,000 peculs of sugar, and 30,000 of pepper. He appeared to have greatly exaggerated the annual produce in benzoin, and observed, that the forests could supply sapan wood in any quantity. He desired to know if the Siamese would be permitted to purchase arms in our ports in India.

When we returned on board, Capt. Dangerfield remained behind after breakfast, for the purpose of being informed respecting the nature of the ceremonies to be performed by us on the following day in the royal presence. In the

course of the day we received a note from Capt. D., stating that Mr. Crawfurd wished to see us on shore on a matter of duty. We found that there existed a difference of opinion on the subject in question. * * *
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This was the first we had heard of the matter in a serious way. We had often in a jocular manner talked on the subject, but, as has been observed, we were yet ignorant of what was expected of us. Immediately thereafter, however, the nature of the intended salutations was pointed out to us, differing certainly very materially from what we had anticipated, and from what Mr. C. had pointed out on a former evening as that which we were to perform. The mode of salutation, in its present shape, admitted of little objection; and, accordingly, after a very few remarks, we agreed to the performance of it. We were to take off our shoes at the door of the hall of audience; when we had entered, we were to take off our hats, and making a bow in the English manner, we were to advance to the seats appointed for us, and there sitting down, with the legs bent backwards and under us, but a little to one side, we were to make three salutations with the hands united before the face, touching the forehead each time. The union of

the hands in this manner appearing to be expressive of supplication, and being used as the sign thereof by many Asiatics, Capt. Dangerfield proposed that in its stead we should salute in the manner done at some of the Hindu courts, by performing the salam with both hands, raising them separately to the head at the same time. It was observed that the difference was very immaterial, and that therefore the Siamese mode should be preferred; besides it appeared that the members of the mission might perform the salutation with more or less correctness as they judged proper, and that it would be deemed enough if they touched the forehead with the hands in any way.

April 8.—It had been communicated to us that the ceremonies of the day would commence at an early hour. Accordingly about seven A.M. we were in attendance on the Agent to the Governor General. At eight o'clock two boats, a large and a small one, shaped like canoes, and turned up at the bow and stern, had come for the purpose of taking us to the palace. The larger had, I think, thirteen paddles, and a man to steer it. It was without ornament of any sort, plain, but neat, with a boarded space in the centre, over which was erected a sort of matted roof. A piece of old carpet, and a small, but old velvet cushion, were placed upon this boarded

space. The rowers in this boat were dressed in caps and loose jackets made of coarse red cloth. The other boat was of small dimensions, but also provided with a seat in the centre, and a cover similar to that of the former.

In this there were stationed only five or six rowers, none of whom appeared to be Siamese. Their appearance was very wretched and mean. They had scarce a rag of clothes of any description, and consisted of boys and decrepit old men. The guard of Sepoys, amounting to thirty in number, were placed in the ship's long-boat, and preceded us to the landing-place near to the palace, where they waited the arrival of the British Agent.

The Barkalan, Suri Wong Montree, set out at an early hour, dressed in his robes of ceremony for the occasion.

The Moorman, Khochai-Sahac, was in attendance to conduct the mission to the palace, and when the boats were ready, gave intimation that it was time to proceed. The smaller boat was occupied by the servants and followers of the mission, while the Agent to the Governor General, accompanied by the gentlemen of his suite, entered the larger. In this we found two Portuguese, who had been born in the country; one of them a respectable-looking man. They were apparently sent to act as interpreters by the way.

The more respectable-looking of the two, seeing that I spoke the Portuguese language very imperfectly, to my great surprise addressed me in the Latin language. The purity of his phraseology excited my surprise still more. It was vastly superior to the monkish jargon, spoken by certain orders of the clergy in some parts of the Continent of Europe. Yet this man had received his education in Siam, in the Catholic seminary of this place. I concluded that he was of the clerical order, but in this I was mistaken.

Our boats, accompanied by a small one which conveyed the Moorman, proceeded towards the palace at a moderate rate. Our presence seemed to excite but little attention on the part of the inhabitants of the floating houses which line the banks of the river, occupied almost exclusively by the Chinese, or on the part of those on board the junks, or those passing and re-passing on the river. Some were observed to laugh immoderately, while others covered the face to conceal mirth which might be considered as rude. A few minutes brought us to the landing-place, within a few paces of the outermost wall of the palace. The Sepoys had arrived here before us, and now disembarked and drew up in a line on the road. The boat which conveyed the servants, being very indifferently supplied with rowers, was still

far behind, so that we had to wait in our boat till their arrival. The place we landed at was dirty, inconvenient, and lumbered with wood and small canoes. It might have been taken for the entrance into a wood-merchant's yard, than many of which this was much less clean and convenient. As great a crowd of people, almost entirely males, as could be collected together in so small a space was here assembled, and viewed us with much, but I cannot say with respectful, curiosity. The gate and wall of the palace were lofty, but mean-looking and in bad taste; neither were the three other gates and inner walls that we passed remarkable for the opposite qualities, not even for labour in their construction, or strength in the design.

Our servants having arrived, we landed, and the palanquins intended for our conveyance were produced. Without our being aware of it, they had come along with us in the boat; a circumstance which will excite but little surprise when it is known that these palanquins consisted merely of a netting in the exact shape of a sailor's *hammock* suspended from a pole. A small piece of carpet was spread in the centre, and each vehicle was carried on the shoulders of two men, one at each end of the pole. We at first experienced a little difficulty in preventing ourselves from rolling out of this contrivance,

and our awkward attempts to do so seemed to afford great amusement to the spectators, who kept shouting aloud until we were within the gate.

We took possession of our vehicles in the order of our respective ranks, the Agent to the Governor General proceeding first. In this manner, accompanied by our Sepoys, the procession passed to an inner gate, distant from the first about one hundred and fifty yards; the road was dirty, and here and there coarsely paved. At this gate we were detained for a few minutes, when it was thrown open. Here we were directed to leave the vehicles, and proceed on foot. We were at the same time directed to take off our swords, and to leave the Sepoys here. We had now entered a spacious and open court of great extent, with various ranges of large tiled buildings disposed in tolerable order, and traversed by roads paved with coarse-grained granite, disposed in right lines.

It deserves to be mentioned, that at the gate last-mentioned, the Moorman, Khochai-Sahac, was joined by another man of the same caste. These, as well as other Moormen whom we saw on the present occasion, were dressed in long loose gowns and turbans, ornamented with gold leaf or tinsel. The two Moormen proceeding in front, and a crowd of spectators on either side, we walked to the distance of about one hundred

yards on a paved road, when turning a short way to the right, we were shewn into a large open building, of mean appearance, and not particularly clean. We had as yet seen no guards or armed persons, and no one on duty except the people at the last gate. In front of the building we had now entered, about six or eight elephants had been drawn up at regular distances, each surmounted by two men in quaint costume.

In this room was placed a small platform, raised about a foot from the ground, covered with a coarse white cloth, and close by a large old carpet was spread, on which we were desired to seat ourselves. Betel and tobacco sprouts were introduced on coarse brass dishes, and a like attention was paid to our servants, who sat on the opposite side of the room. The place was soon crowded with a multitude of low people, some of whom were resting on their knees, and others standing, and all of them were very noisy, insomuch, that now and then it was deemed necessary to coerce with the rod. The profuse and unsparing liberality with which it was applied, seemed to argue the great utility as well as the frequent use of this sort of argument, and we never observed it to fail in procuring a temporary silence. After we had waited somewhat less than half an hour, it was

notified by two men, dressed in an upper garment of white cloth, in the fashion of a wide shirt, with a narrow strip of coarse lace about the middle of the arm, and another at its extremity, that we were called for. These men appeared to me to belong to the police department; and afterwards, when they accompanied us to see the elephants and other objects, they occasionally applied the rod with laudable vigour, to maintain order amongst the rabble. Without addressing themselves to the Agent to the Governor General, they now delivered their message to the Moormen. The latter proposed that we should here pull off our shoes, and walk the remainder of the way without them. This however was overruled, and we again turned into the road which we had left on entering. A line of men armed with muskets was drawn up on each side of the road, and extended to the next gate. Nothing could be more ridiculous or more unsoldierlike than the appearance of this guard, composed of puny boys, scarce able to stand under a musket, and of men of all ages. In their caps only was there any thing like uniformity observable. These were all painted red, and I cannot give a better idea of them than by saying that they exactly resembled the slouched helmets once worn by the workers of fire-engines at home. They scarcely had boldness to look us in the face as we passed;

and among the whole number, which perhaps might amount to one hundred, we did not observe a single flint, nor possibly a serviceable musket. Some had bayonets with scabbards on their muskets, and others scabbards without bayonets. With their muskets awkwardly and slovenly shouldered, some on one side and some on the other, we passed them without exciting sufficient interest to obtain the least notice.

When we had arrived at the gate in front, we were again desired to pull off our shoes. Our servants and followers were permitted to advance no further, and even the interpreters to the Agent to the Governor General were not allowed to proceed. Leaving our shoes at this place, we advanced, on a paved road, through a passage about fifty yards in length, enclosed by a wall on each side, until we came to another, and the innermost gate. This also opened into a spacious oblong place, in which were disposed several lofty and handsome buildings, occupied by the king, or appropriated to particular offices. This space was also intersected by coarsely paved roads, no way remarkable for cleanliness, breadth, or beauty. Facing the gate at which we last entered, there was drawn up a double line of musicians, one on each side of the road through which we advanced. A shrill pipe and numerous tomtoms were the only instruments whose

sounds we heard, though we observed a number of men furnished with horns, trumpets, chanks, *&c.* The music though rude, was not inharmonious or displeasing to the ear, and the interrupted beat, uniform regularity, and softness of the tomtoms was even agreeable. On our right a numerous body of men armed with stout, black, glazed shields and battle axes, were disposed in several close lines within a railing, resting on their knees, and almost concealed by their shields; behind these were placed a few elephants, furnished with scanty but rather elegant housings. Still preceded by the Moormen, we advanced slowly through the musicians to the distance of nearly thirty yards from the last gate, when making a short turn to the right, we entered a plain-looking building, at one end, and soon found that this was the hall of audience. Fronting the door, and concealing the whole of the interior apartment, there was placed a Chinese screen, covered with landscapes and small plates of looking-glass. We halted for a moment on the threshold, and taking two or three steps to the right, so as to get round the screen, we found ourselves suddenly, and somewhat unexpectedly, in the presence of majesty. A more curious, more extraordinary, or more impressive sight has perhaps rarely been witnessed than that on which we now gazed, with mingled feel-

ings of regret, (I should say of indignation,) and of wonder: of wonder excited by the display of taste, elegance and richness in the decorations; of regret, or of indignation, caused by the debased condition of a whole nation. Such a scene was well calculated to take a firm hold on the imagination. I shall, however, endeavour to describe it in its true colours, and with the least possible aid from that faculty. The hall was lofty, wide, and well aired, and appeared to be about sixty or eighty feet in length, and of proportionate breadth. The ceiling and walls were painted with various colours, chiefly in the form of wreaths and festoons; the roof was supported by wooden pillars, ten on each side, painted spirally red and dark green. Some small and rather paltry mirrors were disposed on the walls, glass lustres and wall shades were hung in the centre, and to the middle of each pillar was attached a lantern, not much better than our stable lanterns. The floor was covered with carpets of different colours. The doors and windows were in sufficient numbers, but small and without ornament; at the further extremity of the hall, a large handsome curtain, made of cloth covered with tinsel or gold leaf, and suspended by a cord, divided the space occupied by the throne from the rest of the apartment. On each side of this curtain there were placed five or six singular but handsome orna-

ments, called *chatt*, consisting of a series of small circular tables suspended over each other, diminishing gradually so as to form a cone, and having a fringe of rich cloth of gold, or tissue, suspended from each tablet.

A few of the presents from the Governor General, as bales of cloth and cut-glass, were placed nearly in the middle of the room, and on one side; but we neither remarked the letter from the Noble Marquis, nor did it appear that any notice whatever was taken of it on this public occasion.

With the exception of a space about twenty feet square, in front of the throne, which was kept clear, the hall was crowded with people to excess. Those of every rank, from the highest to the lowest, from the heir apparent to the throne, to the meanest slave present, had his proper place assigned to him, by which alone he was to be distinguished. The costume of all ranks was plain, neither rich nor showy.

The curtain placed before the throne was drawn aside as we entered. The whole multitude present lay prostrate on the earth, their mouths almost touching the ground; not a body or limb was observed to move, not an eye was directed towards us, not a whisper agitated the solemn and still air. It was the attitude, the silence, the solemnity of a multitude simultaneously addressing the great God of the universe,

rather than the homage of even an enslaved people. Not even Rome, fertile in a race of tyrants, nor Dionysius himself, ever produced any degradation to compare with this in ignominy.

Raised about twelve feet above the floor, and about two yards behind the curtain alluded to, there was an arched niche, on which an obscure light was cast, of sufficient size to display the human body to effect, in the sitting posture. In this niche was placed the throne, projecting from the wall a few feet. Here, on our entrance, the king sat immoveable as a statue, his eyes directed forwards. He resembled in every respect an image of Buddha placed upon his throne; while the solemnity of the scene, and the attitude of devotion observed by the multitude, left little room to doubt that the temple had been the source from which the monarch of Siam had borrowed the display of regal pomp. He was dressed in a close jacket of gold tissue, on his left was placed what appeared to be a sceptre; but he wore neither crown nor other covering on the head, nor was the former emblem of the office of royalty displayed on the occasion. The throne was hung round with the same sort of cloth which formed the curtain in front, and behind it were placed two of the conical-shaped ornaments formerly mentioned; except in the quality of the cloth with which the

throne was surrounded, we could observe no indication of opulence, or of magnificence. There were neither jewels, nor costly workmanship, nor precious stones, nor pearls, nor gold observable about the person of the king, his throne, or his ministers. The latter were disposed in three lines laterally, extending from the curtain in front; and thus bounded on each side the empty space at the foot of the throne, according to their respective ranks. The chief Suriwong was placed at a very respectful distance. A considerable degree of light was thrown laterally on the floor at the base of the throne, where large and elegant fans were waved by persons placed behind the curtain. This circumstance added considerable effect to the scene.

Such is a sketch of the form and appearance of Siamese royalty, displayed on our entering the hall. When we had passed the screen, and come in sight of the throne, we pulled off our hats and bowed in the European manner, the two Moormen at the same time falling prostrate, and crawling before us on the ground towards the throne. We were desired to advance in a stooping posture; a narrow space, about three feet in width, was left open in the centre for us to advance through. When we had advanced a few paces in this narrow space, being closely surrounded by the crowd of people, and distant

from the throne more than half the length of the hall, all the ministers being a considerable way in front of us on either side, we were desired to seat ourselves on the carpet, in the narrow lane or space through which we had advanced, which we did in the best way we could, the two Moormen placing themselves immediately in front of the Agent to the Governor General and his Assistant, for the space would only admit of two persons sitting beside each other. Mr. R. and I, therefore, placed ourselves immediately behind the former. We now performed the salutations agreed upon, after which a voice from behind the curtain in front of the throne interrupted the silence which had hitherto prevailed, by reading in a loud tone a list of the presents which had been sent by the Governor General.

The King now addressed some questions to the Agent to the Governor General. He spoke in a firm though not a loud voice; in his person he was remarkably stout, but apparently not bloated or unwieldy; he appeared to be about sixty-five years of age. The questions were repeated by the person who had read the list of presents, and from him they were conveyed in whispers by several individuals, till they reached the Moorman, Kochai-Sahac, who, prostrate like the rest on the ground, whispered them to the Agent to the

Governor General, in a tone which I could not hear, though placed immediately behind the latter. The answers to the throne were passed on in the same way. From the tenor of these questions, as related afterwards by Captain Dangerfield, it would appear that they were of a very general nature, and not particularly interesting. While these questions were passing, betel was introduced in handsome silver vessels and gold cups. The audience having lasted about twenty minutes, the King rose from his seat, and turning round to depart, the curtain was immediately drawn in front of the throne. On this all the people raised a loud shout, and turning on their knees, performed numerous salutations, touching the earth and their forehead alternately, with both hands united. The princes and ministers now assumed a sitting posture, by which, for the first time, we were enabled to observe their respective places. We left the hall of audience without further ceremony. A heavy shower of rain had fallen during the interview, and the roads leading to the different parts of the palace, at no time noted for cleanliness, were now covered with water and converted into a dirty puddle; we therefore requested to have our shoes, but in vain, for no notice whatever was taken of our request. On leaving the door of the audience-hall, a paltry Chinese umbrella, which might

be purchased in the bazar for a rupee, was given to each of us. Not knowing with what view it was presented, I was about to reject it, when I was told that it was meant as a present from the King.

CHAPTER IV.

WHITE ELEPHANTS AND WHITE MONKIES.—TASTE OF THE SIAMESE.—BRAHMANS AND HINDUISM IN SIAM.—LIBRARY OF THE TEMPLE.—ENORMOUS GUNS.—TRADE OF SIAM A ROYAL MONOPOLY.—CHINESE EMIGRANTS.—SUGAR.—SIAMESE POLICY RESPECTING TRADE.—POLICY OF THE ULTRA GANGETIC NATIONS.—AN EMBASSY ARRIVES FROM COCHIN CHINA.—PROCESSION OF ROYAL BARGES OF SIAM TO RECEIVE IT.—SIAMESE MUSIC.—REFLECTIONS ON THE RESULT OF THE MISSION.

THE Moormen, and the two men who had conducted us to the audience-hall, now conducted us through the different courts of the palace. We were still followed by a dirty, mean-looking rabble, whose impudent behaviour was from time to time checked by the two police men, our guides. The streets were remarkably dirty, so that for the greater part of the way we had to walk up to the ancle in mud and water. However, no offer was made to procure us our shoes until we had gone through the whole ceremony of seeing the strange sights of this palace, a tedious and not very gratifying ceremony, which occupied us nearly two hours. The sun had, after the shower, shone out with intense power; the stones over which we passed had in consequence been rendered very hot, and the

alternate passing from these stones into the wet and puddles rendered the promenade not altogether agreeable to persons unaccustomed to walk bare-footed.

We were first conducted to the stables of the white elephants, which, being held in great veneration by the Siamese, are kept within the inner enclosure of the palace, and have habitations allotted to them quite close to those of the King himself.

Of white elephants there are at the present time no fewer than five in the possession of the King, whence we may infer that this variety is far less rare than we are accustomed to believe, at least, that is so in the further peninsula of India. It has, however, seldom happened that so many have been collected at one period, and the present is regarded as auspicious in consequence of an event so unexpected, and so much desired. A white elephant is still reckoned as beyond all value, every effort is made to take them when they are by chance discovered, and the subjects of the King can perform no more gratifying service than that of securing them. They, and indeed all elephants, are the property of the King only.

The appellation white, as applied to the elephants, must be received with some degree of limitation; the animal is in fact an occasional variety,

of less frequent occurrence indeed, but in every respect analogous to what occurs in other orders of animals, and, amongst the rest, in the human species. They are, correctly speaking, Albinos, and are possessed of all the peculiarities of that abnormal production; but of these *white* elephants, it was remarkable that the organ of sight was to all appearance natural and sound, in no way intolerant of light, readily accommodating itself to the different degrees of light and shade, and capable of being steadily directed to objects at the will of the animal; in short, similar in all respects to that of the common elephant, with the exception of the iris, which was of a pure white colour. In this respect, they resembled all the quadrupedal albinos that I had hitherto seen, as those among horses, cows, rabbits. This circumstance I should scarce have thought worth the noticing, were it not that I shall have occasion to mention in the sequel an instance of an animal of the albino kind, possessed of the peculiar eye of the human albino. In one or two of the elephants, the colour was strictly white, and in all of them the iris was of that colour, as well as the margins of the eyelids; in the rest, the colour had a cast of pink in it. The hairs upon the body were for the most part yellowish, but much more scanty, finer, and shorter than in other elephants; the strong hairs

of the tail were darker, but still of a yellowish colour. In none did the colour and texture of the skin appear entirely healthy. In some, the cuticular texture of the legs was interspersed with glandular knobs, which gave a deformed appearance to these members. In others the skin of the body was uncommonly dry, while the natural wrinkles were unusually large, secreted an acrid-like fluid, and seemed ready to burst out into disease. These beasts were all of small size, but in excellent condition, and one of them was even handsome. They were treated with the greatest attention, each having several keepers attached to him. Fresh-cut grass was placed in abundance by their side; they stood on a small boarded platform, kept clean; a white cloth was spread before them, and while we were present they were fed with sliced sugar-cane, and bunches of plantains.

In the same place we observed rather a fine-looking elephant, but a small one, which appeared to me to be a greater object of curiosity than any of the others. This animal was covered all over with black spots, about the size of a pea, upon a white base. It is not unusual to observe a partial degree of this spotted appearance in the elephant of Bengal, as on the forehead and trunk of the animal, but in this

instance the skin was entirely covered with them.

The greatest regard is entertained in Siam for the White Elephant. He who discovers one is regarded as the most fortunate of mortals. The event is of that importance, that it may be said to constitute an era in the annals of the nation. The fortunate discoverer is rewarded with a crown of silver, and with a grant of land equal in extent to the space of country at which the elephants' cry may be heard. He and his family, to the third generation, are exempted from all sorts of servitude, and their land from taxation.

The next and only other animals that we saw here, are certainly of very rare occurrence, and objects of great curiosity. These were two White Monkies, perfect albinos in every respect. They are about the size of a small dog, furnished with a tail about as long as the body. They are thickly covered with fur, which is as white as snow, or that of the whitest rabbit. The lips, eye-lids, and feet are distinguished by the inanimate whiteness of the skin noticed in the human albino, while the general appearance of the iris, the eye, and even the countenance, the intolerance of light, the unsettled air they assumed, and the grimace they affected, afforded

so many points of resemblance between them and that unhappy variety of our species, as rendered the sight disgusting and humiliating. One who had seen a perfect albino of the human species, would find it impossible to separate the impression of his appearance from that of the animals now before us. These had but little of the vivacity or mischievous disposition for which this tribe is so remarkable. All their movements, all their attitudes, had for their apparent object the lessening the effect of light and glare, towards which they always turned their backs. Their eye-brows seemed pursed up and contracted, the pupils were of a light rose-colour, the irides of a very pale cast of blue. One was very old, and had but few teeth in his head. His lips were beside remarkably thick, and apparently diseased. The other was much younger.

It did not appear that they were held in any degree of veneration by the Siamese; we learned that they were placed here from superstitious motives, with the object, as they said, of preventing evil spirits from killing the white elephants.

We next proceeded to visit a temple situated at a short distance beyond the hall of audience. The court is spacious and neat, containing, besides the temple, a handsome small building, in which their sacred books are deposited. At

each of the principal gates are placed gigantic earthen images, of grotesque form, with clubs in their hands, and at each angle of the temple brass figures of a fanciful animal, somewhat resembling a lion. Besides, there were other figures made of clay, paltry in appearance and absurd in design. The temple is of a pyramidal form, highly wrought with minute figures, somewhat in the Chinese style. The character of the ornaments, like that of the paintings on the stern of a Chinese junk, is operose, unmeaning, and grotesque; yet the general effect was in the present instance not unpleasing to the spectator, who regarding it at some distance, overlooked the minuteness alluded to. I remarked that the Siamese have adopted the pyramid, generally a quadrangular one, instead of the dome, the only form in which the Bauddhists of Ceylon build the sepulchral edifice called Dagoba, the architectural characteristic of their religion. The cause of this difference, in a matter so closely interwoven with their religion, is probably to be looked for in the different genius of the nations, to which cause also we must attribute the difference observable in their respective images of Buddha himself, for to the individuals of neither people are we to look for the original exemplar of that form. The Siamese, like other tribes of the Moghul race, seem to have formed to them-

selves a standard of beauty, differing both from that of Europeans and of Indians. Hence the sharp, the harsh, the fanciful, the improbable, are more considered by them than the soft, the majestic, and the just in architecture. The different forms given to the Dagoba, and to their temples and palaces, would illustrate this remark. A similar taste is displayed in the decorations of their private houses, in which you look in vain for truth or nature in the representation of animal beings. A wild unchastened fancy prevails among them ; hence the origin of monsters and of the grotesque figures which cover the walls of the houses of their chiefs. Yet, though monstrous, unnatural, and unmeaning, they are not altogether destitute of a certain degree of spirit and of boldness in the execution. What degree and kind of genius they may possess in music and in the arts remains to be seen. In the actual state of our knowledge, I cannot but consider the Siamese as prodigiously inferior to the rude inhabitants of the interior of Ceylon, with whom, as professing the same religion, they will admit of a comparison. In the elegant and imposing structure of the Dagoba, in the numerous figures of Buddha, whether made of earth, stone, ivory, brass, wood, silver, or gold, the latter are manifestly superior artists and architects. The Siamese

would appear to excel in the number of their images, the Kandians in their quality. The Siamese temple, rich in the frippery and tinsel of a Chinaman's toy-shop, with its three hundred images, reminds you more of children's playthings than of the place of devotion; while the Kandian, by the skilful distribution of light and shade, and proper position of one, or, at most, of a few well-executed images, produces an effect at once solemn, majestic, and impressive.

But if this obliquity of genius, if I may so call it, be so remarkable in the matters already alluded to, it is still more so in all that is calculated to give an insight into the constitution of their mind. The people are governed by opinion, absurd and unjust, not by reason, by sense, nor by kindness. The most degrading and brutal tyranny is mistaken for well-meaning patriarchal kindness; and the oppression of the multitude, and the grinding of the many, is regarded as the will of the Deity. No man either wishes for, or aspires to, freedom of thought or of action; and tyranny has cast its roots so deep, that change would seem hopeless.

But to return to the temple. I have observed that it was of a pyramidal form, the point terminating in a slender spire, about 200 feet high. Within, the building constituted a single lofty

chamber, about 50 feet long, and nearly as much in breadth, paved with stones. In the centre were placed, on irregular stages, a countless number of small figures of Buddha, intermixed with bits of looking-glass, scraps of gilded paper, and Chinese paintings. Surmounting the rest was a figure of Buddha, about a foot and a half high, in a sitting posture, made, as our guides would have us to believe, of emerald. The stone was either the Chinese figure-stone, or Heliotrope, but it was placed at too great a distance for us to be able to say exactly which. There was here nothing in the shape of an altar, nor any convenience save the floor on which to place fruit and flowers, the usual offerings made to Buddha. A number of vagrant, idle people, had followed us. They entered the temple, and behaved with a degree of noisy indecorum, which could not fail to surprise us.

Surrounding the temple, and forming its enclosure, there is a paved passage, covered in above, and supported by pillars. The walls of this passage are covered with rude paintings of allegorical subjects, chiefly taken from the story of the Ramayana, a celebrated epic poem of the Hindus. It would appear, indeed, that many of the absurdities of the Hindu religion are intermingled with that of Buddha. There are in Bankok a few Brahmans, who are entertained

by the king, and have built a small temple. The Siamese cultivate a lock of hair on the forehead, which lock they preserve from birth to the age of twelve, fourteen, or sixteen, untouched. At the expiration of this period, they institute a great feast; presents are made by all the relations and friends of the family, and the occasion is rendered one of great joy. The Brahman then, sprinkling a little water on the head, and repeating certain prayers, cuts the lock. When the children of the king undergo this ceremony, an artificial hill is constructed, on which the Brahman performs the ceremony.

Close to the temple stands the pyramidal building, in which the sacred books are kept. You ascend to it by a flight of steps, covered with plates of tin, as is also the floor of the room. The books cannot be very numerous. They are contained in a pyramidal upright cupboard, richly ornamented with small pieces of mother-of-pearl.

Returning by the road we had entered, we repassed the inner and second gates of the palace, when we found ourselves in the enclosure where we had halted for some time before entering the audience-hall. The only objects worthy of remark in this place were several ridiculously and uselessly large brass guns. They must, from their size, be equally unserviceable and

unmanageable. They seemed, however, to pride themselves not a little in possessing guns of such a calibre. They appeared to have been uncommonly well cast.

Having now been shewn all that was thought worthy of notice, we were reconducted to the room in which we had first halted. It was again soon filled with the rabble. A plentiful dessert of sweet-meats was introduced, and the Moorman was particularly desirous that we should partake of it. But it was impossible to overlook the mean condition of those left to entertain us, the disreputable appearance of the building, or the jeering and disrespectful conduct of the herd of spectators that crowded round us. It seemed as if the court had said, *See them feed.*

As we were leaving the palace, several of the chiefs were returning home at the same time, and afforded us an opportunity of observing that they used vehicles more respectable and more comfortable than those they had assigned for the use of the Agent to the Governor General. We now procured our slung hammocks, and were carried back to our boats. About one, P. M., we reached the ship.

A large quantity of sweet-meats, those which had been placed before us on our visit to the palace, was sent home after us; and, in the course of the afternoon, the chief, Suri-wong,

paid the Agent to the Governor General a visit, and said that he had been desired to entertain us with a dinner. A profusion of roasted pork, goats' flesh, ducks, fowls, &c., was then brought by his servants and laid on the table, together with a couple of decanters of a wine nearly as strong and fiery as brandy. He remained a spectator of the entertainment, but would not eat or drink with us. He conversed with more ease with us than he had hitherto done. He said we had been highly honoured, and seemed to be quite pleased with the transactions of the day. He asked many questions, and wished to be thought easy and free, but his manner was coarse and impolite to a degree quite unusual in an Asiatic. * * * * *

On reviewing the transactions of this day, and connecting them with the general conduct of the officers of the Siamese government towards the mission, from the period of our arrival in the country, it will appear that we had but little reason to be elated with success, or proud of our reception at court.

In their visits, the most petty officers arrogated a superiority which certainly did not belong to their inferior station, for some of them turned out to be low retainers of the chiefs, to whom they performed the offices of menials, and crouched on the ground before them, as we afterwards

found on visiting those chiefs. The demand that the guns should be landed before we proceeded up the river, though a punctilio they readily conceded, but little stress having to all appearance been laid upon it from the commencement, shewed that nothing was beneath their notice, and we may infer from their sending a single narrow boat, capable of holding at most but three persons, on a short journey, for the accommodation of the Agent to the Governor General, that they wished to hold the mission very cheap.

After we had arrived nearly opposite to the palace, no notice whatever was taken of the ship, any more than if she had not been there, and the first communication had for its object to obtain possession of the presents sent by the Governor General. It was impossible to attribute to ignorance their affected indifference, and studied inattention to whatever related to the accommodation, the wants, or the comforts of the gentlemen of the mission. Hospitality is a virtue not altogether unknown to any nation or people ; with politeness, it is much the same. Their leading features are acknowledged by all people. Nations differ only in the mode of their expression. On these points there seems no reason to believe that the Siamese are much behind their neighbours. To individuals they had often behaved with attention and kindness, and particularly so to the captains of ships and European traders.

The inference therefore is, that, in the present instance, they listened to political motives only, and though the matter was of that trifling importance as scarce to deserve mention, yet, taken in conjunction with their conduct in other matters, it throws some light upon the view in which they held the present mission. Every person of rank carefully abstained from coming near us, Kochai Sahac, being the channel of reference to the chief Suri-Wong Montree, who is not among the persons of the highest rank, but only acting * Barkalan, the chief, whose office this is, being either too old, or otherwise incapable of attending to his duties. Our introduction to the king, and the particular place assigned to the mission, at the audience, and other circumstances before alluded to, require no comment. The court in granting a public audience had displayed its power, and perhaps its riches, motives of themselves sufficient to induce a government supported chiefly by appearances, to grant such audience. It is known that the king receives envoys from other potentates in a very different manner, with ceremony, with pomp, wearing his crown at the audience. It was evident therefore that they affected to treat the mission from the Governor General of Bengal as of inferior consequence, and that they meant to consider it

* According to Loubere, Pra-Klang is the same title as Barkalan.

in the light of a deputation from the governor of a province, such deputations being common amongst the neighbouring powers. This matter was placed beyond a doubt some days afterwards, the moorman Kochai stating that the mission had been received by the king as a deputation from a provincial government.

Seeing that no notice whatever was taken, nor even mention made, of the letter from the Governor General at our public presentation, we could no longer entertain doubts as to the idea which they wished to impress upon the public mind respecting the importance of the government of Bengal. We, however, had abundant reason to believe that well-informed persons about the government were not ignorant of the vast power, the extensive dominion, the unparalleled equity of that government.

The presents from the Governor General were laid out before us in the hall, and a crier read in a loud voice a list of them, a circumstance also open to suspicion, particularly as the interpreters to the mission were not permitted to be present, or even to pass the inner gate of the palace. Under such circumstances it appeared that they might represent our word *presents* in whatever light was most flattering to their pride, their vanity, or their crooked policy.

With respect to the actual objects of the

mission, the proposals were so moderate, so obviously of mutual advantage, that, from all we could yet learn, the government would be as anxious to confer them as ours to receive them.

The encouragement given to the Chinese traders and labourers, and the limited adventures of the king and some of the principal men about him, had given them a foretaste of the advantages of commerce, which they were now very anxious to improve. They were becoming sensible of the errors created by their cupidity, in imposing innumerable and vexatious duties. Blind to their real interests, as well as ignorant of the practice of commerce, the king and his ministers still continue to be the sole merchants, retaining in their own hands the monopoly of all articles of consequence, and holding it contraband for any others to intermeddle. They have yet to learn that it is possible to fill the treasury with less risk, less trouble, and more credit, from the industry and fair profits of their subjects; and hence King Chau-chee-veet, "the Lord of Life," continues to be the first trader in his kingdom.

It is to the Chinese nation that they are indebted for whatever knowledge they possess of the advantages of commercial intercourse. In defiance of the laws of the celestial empire, there would appear to be scarcely any limit to the extent of emigration from that great empire. Her

subjects are the best and most industrious part of the population of the surrounding nations, over whom their industry, their superior intelligence, and knowledge of the arts, have given them a great and decided superiority. Siam, a country sunk under the most debasing tyranny, destitute alike of arts and commerce, offered a fair field for the developement of their superiority. Fear had long opposed obstacles to the increase of the Chinese, till at length the government either from conscious incapacity of restraining them longer, or from motives of a different nature, has at length given them the most unbounded encouragement, and granted them privileges which render their condition infinitely preferable to that of the natives of the country. On the other hand the benefits which the Chinese emigrants have conferred upon this rude nation, are of obvious and striking utility, and of no ordinary importance. They have sown the seeds of commercial enterprise. They have created commerce where none previously existed, and with their hands they have, as it were, called into existence some of the more valuable objects of commerce. Scarce twenty years have elapsed since the first sugar canes were planted in this kingdom. The annual produce in sugar, at the present time, is stated to amount to 30,000 peculs, of 133½lbs. each, or

1788 tons. This constitutes, in fact, the most valuable commercial article of the realm. The culture is managed solely by the Chinese, and it is the opinion of the chief Suri-Wong, that it may be carried to an almost unlimited extent. Such being the nature of the advantages derived from the unremitting industry of the Chinese, it is not to be wondered at, if that people should enjoy privileges denied to European and other nations. Chinese traders are accordingly subjected to less vexatious proceedings in their commercial transactions, and are even allowed to purchase the principal commodities at a lower rate of duty than other nations, the difference in the article of sugar amounting to fifty per cent. less than the general rate.

Not satisfied, however, with the trade carried on by the Chinese junks, the king has shewn a strong desire to increase its extent, although the means which he has adopted are not well calculated to effect that object. His proper subjects are altogether ignorant of maritime science, and seem to possess but few of the qualities necessary to ensure success in such employments; he is, therefore under the necessity of employing foreigners, as native Christians, Arabs, and other Mahommedans, to navigate his vessels. He, nevertheless, sends annually to various ports in

China from ten to twelve junks, of moderate size, laden with sugar, pepper, sapan, and iron wood.

It is, however, with the commercial nations of Europe that he is most desirous to establish the relations of trade. The great size of their vessels, their valuable and select cargoes, and more particularly their ready command of capital, and integrity of conduct, place them at once beyond competition and rivalship. A conscious sense of his own weakness, however, operates strongly as a check upon his intercourse with Europeans. To these fears a debasing cupidity is superadded, and the result is exhibited in a code of irksome and illiberal regulations, calculated at once to disgust and to disappoint the liberal-minded trader. In the actual condition of the existing government, there is but little room to hope for amelioration of policy, or improvement of circumstances. Still less, I conceive, are we to expect that they will lay aside their old prejudices, and adopt in their stead those regulations which, amongst Europeans, are the foundation of what is called free trade. They may, indeed, be induced to lower the duties on certain articles, but it is to be feared that neither the king nor his ministers will abandon their favourite system of monopoly.

That the Siamese government is not disposed,

at the present time, to adopt the European notions of free trade, we have a proof in its conduct with regard to the trading brig, Phœnix, belonging to Mr. Storm. Trusting probably to the favourable disposition produced by the mission, this vessel was freighted with articles from Calcutta, which were conceived to be adapted to the Siamese market. She had no sooner arrived at the mouth of the river, than it was communicated by the Siamese government to the Agent to the Governor General that this vessel should afford an instance of the disposition of the government, and that she should enjoy all the privileges and advantages which the royal Majesty of Siam meant to confer upon British merchants. The ordinary policy was immediately resorted to. The king and his ministers insist on the privilege of purchasing before any permission can be granted to trade. They send to demand musters of the articles imported, and affix their own price for such as they wish to purchase. Three weeks have thus passed before any final answer is returned, or the musters sent back, during the whole of which time no boat, no trader, no individual of any description, is permitted to visit the ship, or to hold intercourse with the owners on board. It may be readily conceived that no subject will dare to offer a higher price than that which has been tendered by the king and his

ministers. The waste of time must of itself be no little inconvenience to the merchant. It would seem as if it were the object of the Siamese government to disgust the trader, in this manner, by unnecessary delay, hoping thereby to reduce him to the necessity of selling his goods on their own, or, at least, on more moderate terms. In the meanwhile the most evasive answers are returned to every proposition. The slightest and most indifferent matters are rendered a source of annoyance, nor is any proposition or representation on the part of the trader met openly and candidly, but shuffled off in a mean and paltry manner.

From the conduct of the government towards this ship, it soon became apparent how little they were disposed to grant to British merchants. The Agent to the Governor General had been assured that the duties should be lowered two per cent. below the present rate. It was now unequivocally stated that no such reduction should take place until the English sent five ships annually: it was afterwards stated that this reduction would be enforced after the period of two years or so.

The most urgent and frequently repeated solicitations could not induce them to give any answer on the subject of trade for the course of an entire month, nor could the musters which they

had demanded from Mr. Storm be got back again. It afterwards appeared that one object of this delay was to give time to the junks to arrive from Singapore with their cargoes, by which means during this delay the prices of articles were reduced twenty per cent.

While the ship lay here, it was vain to expect to be able to dispose of any thing until the government had returned an answer. At length a communication was made to the effect that the government would purchase, but on terms to which Mr. Storm could not accede. The latter now expected that he should be able to dispose of his goods to the inhabitants of the place, but none of them ever came near him, nor could they dare to offer a higher price than that tendered by the Pra-Klang.

It will no doubt appear strange that a people, so anxious for the commerce of European nations, as to hold out privileges in proportion to the extent of that trade, should notwithstanding raise so many obstacles against the obvious tendency of their apparent measures. Various and very opposite feelings would appear to have given birth to this manifest inconsistency of conduct—of which national pride, and undisguised cupidity, vindicate a large share. There can be little doubt but that much of the annoyance given to the European trader is viewed by them as a

matter of exultation—and it must be
that the eagerness with which the former have sought for their commerce, leading them to submit to insult and degradation, has cherished this sentiment on the part both of the government and of the people, It is the nature of the Ultra-Gangetic nations to rise in their demands in proportion as they can enforce, or in any way procure submission to their will. They are universally more influenced by firmness, boldness, and decision, than by the most sound and conclusive arguments, the most mild, inoffensive, and conciliating conduct. They are either insensible to, or regardless of, the latter sort of argument. He that would have them listen to arguments of reason and common sense, must be backed by the hand of power, and hold the rod in reserve. From such people nothing but insult is to be expected by submission; and as these nations have an unquestionable and natural right to dictate the terms on which they will hold intercourse with Europeans, it becomes a question of some interest, how far the conduct usually pursued by the latter has had a good or bad effect in promoting the interests of their respective countries.

Unfortunately for the credit of the commercial nations of Europe, their subjects have conducted themselves in this trade with views solely of per-

some interest, totally disregarding the honour and character of the nation to which they have belonged. In order to gain paltry advantages, they often submitted to accumulated injuries, and to the most degrading insults. It has thence happened that the character of Europeans, even at the present time, stands but very low with the nations occupying the Eastern ports of Asia. The Chinese, the most intelligent of these nations, affect to consider the British as a nation of ingenious tradesmen, little better, in fact, than watch-makers, who owe their prosperity to their intercourse with their country. The Siamese, conscious of the power of our Indian government, affect a less haughty tone, yet fancy themselves infinitely superior to us, inasmuch as we are so eager to purchase their commerce. In common with most nations, they entertain a high opinion of the bravery of their countrymen,—of the strength of their armies, and of the superior wealth of their country.

The petty disputes in whch they are often engaged with the captains of ships and other traders, who subject themselves to systematic annoyance, have tended to confirm them in this good opinion. They are either too ignorant, or too infatuated, to perceive, that the latter, being in a great measure placed at their mercy, unsupported by the authority of their own government,

and destitute of every means of redress, afford them a conquest as easy as it is inglorious and dishonest. Every petty and unworthy advantage thus gained, is magnified into a triumph, not merely over the individual, but over the government of which he is the subject; for as they are ignorant of the manners and customs and superior civilization of other nations, so they cannot conceive that such great ships, and such valuable commodities, can belong to any one but the king, or to some one of his principal officers.

Another circumstance which has contributed to render the present government more haughty and assuming in its transactions with strangers, is the tranquillity which for a considerable number of years has prevailed in this country; tranquillity for which they are more indebted to the ignorance of their neighbours, than to the wisdom of their own measures. They have not yet measured their strength with a power more civilized than themselves.

It may be doubted also whether, notwithstanding their apparent wish to increase commerce, the innumerable obstacles which Europeans in particular have to contend with be not intentional, as tending to increase the safety of their kingdom by discouraging the access of strangers. The conduct of the government would seem to justify such an opinion, though from motives of

policy, it may be deemed prudent to cloak such sentiments under feigned representations.

That a great, generous, and warlike nation, such as Great Britain, should incur the possibility of having her national honour slighted, if not tarnished, by any nation under the sun, far less by a semi-barbarous people, experience has rendered less a matter of surprise than of regret. It cannot be altogether a matter of indifference what opinion shall be entertained of her by so large a portion of the human race, as that occupying the countries between the Ganges and the Yellow Sea. Neither is national honour a mere sound or but an empty name—for in this sound rests the strength of kingdoms, the safety of nations. It is this that fans the flame in the patriot's breast—it is this that nerves the soldier's arm—it is this motive which more than any other converts the man into the hero.

Britain may well command the esteem, if not the homage, of such nations. An open, manly, and disinterested conduct, on the part of her subjects, is alone sufficient to establish such an opinion; but while the success of commercial enterprise is alone regarded, national honour will be left to shift for itself. The immense value of the commerce with China, doubtless, is an object of the most powerful temptation—but with respect to Siam, no such motives exist. Her commerce,

supposing it altogether unshackled, and left to full and free operation, is after all but very trifling. It seems doubtful whether it be equal to employ annually four or five ships of moderate size; and the most valuable commodities of the country are bulky, such as sugar. The consumption of British manufactures by the natives is trifling in the extreme. Britain has more to give than to receive from such a nation.

But it more immediately concerns the honour and safety of our Indian government to maintain a dignified and imposing attitude in its intercourse with these nations. The existing government having established an everlasting fame, upon the firmest basis, has also raised its honour and its faith to an enviable height. They will doubtless continue to watch over it with the most jealous care.

That the crazy, disjointed, and puny government of Siam should affect to treat the government of Bengal as inferior, and that it should impudently dare to consider an authorized envoy from that state, as a messenger from a provincial government, may well excite our surprise and indignation.

May 6th.—About this period intelligence was was brought to court that an ambassador from Cochin China had arrived at the mouth of the river. After crossing the peninsula of Cambodia,

he took shipping at the port of Saigon, and, attended by a numerous train of followers, arrived at Paknam in a small fleet of praws. Notice of his arrival was immediately conveyed to Court. The Chief of Paknam was ordered to entertain the ambassador during his stay at that place, and in the mean time the requisite measures were taken for the purpose of conveying him to the capital in a manner suitable to his rank. The festivities of Paknam, though not of the most costly nature, were probably the best the country could afford. They lasted for several days, and consisted chiefly of scenic representations, musical entertainments, and gymnastic exercises.

An event of this nature was calculated to excite attention and awaken curiosity; it was altogether unexpected by us. We were naturally desirous to compare our own situation with that of the Cochin-Chinese, endeavouring thence to form a judgment of the real sentiments of the Siamese respecting the English mission.

What the real object of this embassy may have been, we had no correct means of ascertaining, but the avowed and ostensible one was said to have originated in a feeling of gratitude on the part of the reigning king of Cochin China, for the asylum and protection that had been granted to his predecessor by the King of Siam, in the

midst of his misfortunes, when his country was usurped by his own rebellious subjects, and he himself an exile and a suppliant in the land of strangers. He had now sent his ambassador to assure the King of Siam of his good and peaceable intentions, and of his desire to confirm the bonds of amity with a nation which had behaved with so much disinterestedness towards his family, during the anarchy of the civil war which had driven them from the throne.

An embassy which the same king had some time ago sent to the Barman Court had excited distrust and jealousy in the Siamese, who regard the Barmans as their natural and most implacable enemies. Watchful at all times of the conduct of the Cochin-Chinese, and uncertain how the new king of that country might be affected towards them, this unexpected embassy to the Court of Amarapura awakened their fears. An embassy was immediately sent to Cochin-China, for the avowed purpose of discovering the motives of the embassy to Ava, as well as to sound the inclination of the new king towards the Siamese. The present embassy, therefore, might be considered as complimentary to the Siamese, while the distinction with which it was received evidently shewed that they were flattered by it. It would perhaps be deemed more curious than useful or flattering, to contrast the

reception which this ambassador, a simple messenger from a comparatively small state, received, with that which had so lately been bestowed upon the mission from the Governor General of British India. It is sufficient to observe, that even the Prince Chroma Chit, one of the principal members of the Government, was known to express his regret publicly that the Cochin-Chinese ambassador should have arrived at such a time, as the English gentlemen could not fail to make unfavourable comparisons.

About a week after the arrival of the ambassador at Paknam, it would appear that all the necessary preparations for conveying him to the capital had been made ready. A numerous set of boats was appointed for his service. In these he embarked with his train of followers, and proceeding by easy stages up the river, treated with entertainments and every mark of distinction and civility by the way, he arrived at Bankok.

The weather was mild and agreeable, particularly calculated to display a procession of this nature to every advantage. The scene, too, was interesting beyond expectation; it was both beautiful and picturesque. The rapidity with which the boats and barges moved, the order and regularity with which innumerable rowers raised and depressed their paddles, guided by

the shrill notes of a song that might well be deemed barbarous, together with the singular and barbaric forms, the brilliant colours, the gilded canopies of the boats, the strange and gaudy attire of the men, the loud and reiterated acclamations of innumerable spectators,—gave to the transient scene an effect not easily described.

It was now, for the first time, that we had an opportunity of seeing those singular and highly-ornamented royal barges which had attracted the attention of M. Chaumont and suite, ambassador to Siam from the Court of Louis XIV. The description given of them by Loubere, in his *Histoire de Siam*, will, with very little alteration, apply to those now in use. They are in general from sixty to eighty feet, or more, in length, about four in breadth, and raised about two feet in the middle from the water, the bow and stern rising boldly to a considerable height. They are highly-ornamented with curious and not inelegant devices, all of which are neatly carved on the wood and gilt. The form is that of some monstrous or imaginary animal. In the centre there is erected a canopy, generally well gilt, and hung with silken curtains, or cloth interwoven with gold tissue. The space under the canopy is calculated to contain but one or two persons, the

rest of the boat being entirely occupied by the rowers, often to the number of forty or fifty.

The procession moved in the following order:

Four long boats in front, with numerous rowers, dressed in red jackets, and wearing tall conical caps of the same colour. These boats were covered with a light awning of mats.

Six richly-ornamented boats, with gilded canopies, in the form of a dome, and richly carved. In these were the assistants and suite of the ambassador. Each boat carried two small brass swivels in front; the men were dressed as in the former. About forty rowers were in each boat.

A very handsome, richly-ornamented barge, with a gilt canopy of a conical shape, and rich curtains; in which was the ambassador, bearing the letter from the King of Cochin China.

Four or six boats similar to those in front.

In the course of a few days after his arrival at Bankok, he was admitted to an audience of the king, without going through those forms which had been pointed out as necessary to be observed by the Agent to the Governor General. The Cochin-Chinese ambassador neither visited the Prince Chroma-Chit, nor his deputy the Pra-Klang, Suri-Wong, before he had obtained an audience of the king.

His first, and public interview with the king is

said to have been friendly and somewhat familiar. No business is ever transacted on such occasions. The king, seated under a rich canopy, received the ambassador in the hall of audience, according to his more usual custom.

The ambassador was carried to the palace by his own followers in a palanquin, preceded by a number of armed men. He got out of his vehicle at the inner gate, and walking up to the hall of audience, without laying aside his shoes, took his seat in the place allotted to him, taking his own interpreter along with him.

Although no business was transacted, the interview lasted for a considerable time. The hall, as on the occasion of our introduction at court, was crowded with persons of various rank.

On the *20th*, the ambassador paid his first visit to the Pra-klang, on which occasion we had an opportunity of seeing him and his suite, our chambers being so situated as to afford a view of all that passed during the interview. The Siamese choose the early part of the night to pay their visits. The Pra-klang, on this occasion, had lighted his rooms in the handsomest style, and had disposed of his gayest furniture with all the taste he was master of. A new carpet and cushion were produced for his own use, while the old one was abandoned to his visitor, who was also to occupy the place the chief

was wont to recline on during visits, the latter retiring to a more distant part of the room.

All the servants and retainers of the chief were summoned to attend on this important occasion, and now lay prostrate on the floor, like so many inanimate images, at one end of the room, in a double row. A number of lights were placed outside, and persons bearing torches were posted from the bank of the river to the house.

It was evident that the Pra-klang was anxious to make as great display as possible before the stranger, and though the taste exhibited throughout, and more particularly in the too profuse decorations of the room, were widely different from what we are accustomed to admire, yet it must be admitted that the effect produced was altogether surprising, and far beyond what we could have anticipated from a people unquestionably very rude in many of the arts of civilized life. It deserves to be mentioned, however, that the glass manufacturer of Europe had contributed not a little towards this display.

The ambassador seemed little inclined to abate one jot of his dignity on this occasion. After keeping the anxious chief and his bustling attendants in suspense for several hours, he at length appeared with twenty or thirty attendants, and some persons bearing presents in boxes.

The ambassador was rather an elderly man,

below the middle stature, of a thin, lanky, and spare habit, with sharp eyes and sunk cheeks. He was remarkably fair for an Asiatic. He wore on his head a piece of black crape, loosely rolled into the form of a turban. He had on a loose gown, with wide sleeves, of the same material and colour as his turban, and both he and his suite were habited in black. Several chobs were carried before him, and three black umbrellas were held over him. A few menials were dressed in jackets of coarse red cloth and conical caps, surmounted by a plume of red hair.

The address of the ambassador was both dignified and easy. He stood on the threshold for an instant, surveying the room, regardless of the chief, and advanced to the carpet in the centre of the place. He here made a slight salutation by raising his right hand towards his face. His interpreter and a few others seated themselves by him. Sweetmeats were now introduced, and after the lapse of an hour or so, they parted.

On the 17*th May*, the noisy ceremony called Khon-chook terminated, on which occasion the English and Portuguese in the place, consisting of Mr. Crawfurd and suite, Mr. de Sylveira, the Portuguese consul, and his secretary Mr. Baptiste, Captain M'Donnell of the John Adam and two of his mates, Captain Smith and Mr. Storm of the brig Phœnix, and two Portuguese from

Macao, were invited by the Pra-klang to a dinner prepared in the European fashion.

I have before remarked that it is an invariable and very ancient custom amongst the Siamese to preserve a lock of hair on the forehead of their children, which is guarded intact until a certain period of their age, when it is cut with great ceremony. The ceremony is called Khon-chook, and takes place at the 11th, 13th, or 15th year of age, according to the inclination of the parents. It is a time of great festivity and shew. The relations and friends of the family make presents according to the extent of their ability; the priests are frequently assembled to say prayers; are fed and presented with new robes of yellow cloth, that being the only colour they are permitted to wear. Different bands of national music are assembled, and the festivities are kept up with unceasing attention for the space of five days. On this occasion, the eldest, and favourite son of the Pra-klang, a puny, sickly, but intelligent boy, had attained the proper age for the performance of this ceremony. The rank and situation of the father was such as to command a very bountiful supply of presents. Of these we may instance that of the Prince Chroma-chit, who is said to have given four catties of silver, equal to 240 ticals, and that of the Agent to the Governor General, who gave five,

The tical is somewhat less than a third more in value than a rupee.

This ceremony would appear to be more agreeable to the tenets and practice of the Hindu than of the Bauddhic religion. The priests of the latter took no farther interest in it than to repeat certain prayers at particular periods, whilst the tonsure is, in fact, performed by a Brahman, with great ceremony, and an affectation of mystery, after he had repeated a set of unintelligible prayers. A few Brahmans are maintained in the country for the due performance of this particular ceremony. The Siamese entertain considerable respect for the professors of the Hindu faith. It is not to be expected however that Brahmans so situated, exiled from the soil which originated and cherished their faith, would long preserve its tenets in purity. The prayers of the priests of Buddha were repeated by several persons at once, in a sort of recitative style, and, as usual, in the Pali or sacred text, a language altogether unintelligible to the vulgar, and but imperfectly understood even by the greater number of priests. The multitude listen to these prayers with the most perfect indifference. They neither observe decorum nor respect on such occasions, each seeming by his conduct to imply that this was a business which touched him little, either as regards this world or

the next. Even in the temple, their respect for the sanctity of the place, which the presence of their idols might be supposed to command, is but little observable. Both priests and laymen are often seen squatted on the pavement playing at chess, and other games of chance, before the shrines of the gods.

Several of the best bands of music were assembled on this occasion, and relieved each other in succession. One of these consisted of female performers only; the others of male performers, whose music was occasionally interspersed with the plaintive notes of a female voice. The difference of the several bands consisted chiefly in the greater or less power, or body of the music, if I may so express it; the softest and most pleasing being that of the female band.

The Siamese are naturally very fond of music, and even persons of rank think it no disparagement to acquire a proficiency in the art. This music is for the most part extremely lively, and more pleasing to the ear of an European, than the want of proficiency in the more useful arts of civilized life would lead him to expect of such a nation. Whence this proficiency has arisen may be somewhat difficult to explain, more especially as the character of their music partakes but little of that eccentricity of genius and apparent heaviness of mind and imagination, for

which they are, in other respects, so remarkable. We have no means of ascertaining what is of domestic origin, or how much they may be indebted to foreign intercourse for the improvement of their music. On inquiry we were told that the principal instruments were of Barman, Pegu, or Chinese origin, and that much of the music had been borrowed from the two first mentioned nations, particularly from Pegu.

It is somewhat singular that these nations again consider the Siamese as superior in musical skill, and attribute to the latter the invention of the principal instruments, as may be seen in Colonel Symes's account of those countries.

It might be supposed that the Siamese had borrowed their music from the same source that they have their religion, the softness, the playful sweetness and simplicity of the former seeming to harmonize in some degree with the humane tenets, the strict morality and apparent innocence of the latter. The prominent and leading character, however, of the music, appears to be common to the Malays, and other inhabitants of the Indian islands, as well as to the whole of the Indo Chinese nations.

My friend Captain Dangerfield, himself an adept in musical science, remarks, that the music of the Siamese differs from that of all barbarous tribes, in being played upon a different key—on

that, if I understand him right, which characterizes the pathetic music of certain European nations. There is certainly no harsh or disagreeable sound, no sudden or unexpected transition, no grating sharpness in their music. Its principal character is that of being soft, lively, sweet, and cheerful, to a degree, which seemed to us quite surprising. They have arrived beyond the point of being pleased with mere sound—the musician aimed at far higher views, that of interesting the feelings, awakening thought, or exciting the passions. Accordingly they have their different kinds of music, to which they have recourse according as they wish to produce one or other of these effects.

Their pieces of music are very numerous. A performer of some notoriety, who exhibited before us, stated that he knew one hundred and fifty tunes. This man brought with him two instruments, the one a wind, the other a stringed instrument. The former, called klani, resembled a flageolet, as well in form as in the tones, which however, were fuller, softer, and louder, than those of that instrument. His manner of blowing on it resembled that of a person using the blow-pipe. He was thus enabled to keep up an uninterrupted series of notes.

The other, a more curious, as well as more agreeable instrument, is called tuk-kay, from its

fancied resemblance to a lizard, though in point of form, to me it appears to approach nearer to that of a Chinese junk. It is about three feet long, has a hollow body, and three large sounding holes on the back, which is of a rounded form. It is composed of pieces of hard wood, inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Three strings, one of brass wire, the others of silk, supported on small bits of wood, extend from one end of the instrument to the other, and are tuned by means of long pegs. The performer pressing his left hand on the cords, strikes them at proper distances, with the fore-finger of the right.

There is another instrument, called khong-nong *, the music of which is also very pleasant. It consists of a series of small cymbals of different sizes, suspended horizontally in a bamboo frame, forming a large segment of a circle. It is sometimes so large, that the performer may sit within the circle of the instrument, his back being then turned to the vacant space.

The tones of this instrument are very pleasing. It is usually accompanied by the instrument called ran-nan; this is formed of flat bars of wood, about a foot in length, and an inch in breadth, placed by the side of each other, and disposed so as to form an arch, the convexity of which is downwards. Both this and the last-mentioned

* See RAFFLES' *Java*, Vol. I. 470.

instrument are struck with a light piece of wood, or a small mallet.

The task were more tedious than useful or entertaining to enumerate all the musical instruments used by the Siamese. They have herein displayed much ingenuity, and no inconsiderable proficiency, combining various instruments so as to produce a very pleasing effect. In conclusion, we may observe, that there is a very remarkable difference between the character of their vocal and instrumental music, the former being as plaintive and melancholy, as the latter is lively and playful.

20th May, 1822.—Though but little of an agreeable or satisfactory nature has occcured respecting the commercial or political objects of the mission since our arrival, it seems proper that we should here take a brief and cursory view of these transactions. As the subject was unavoidably rendered one of public notoriety, and often became matter of conversation between Captain Dangerfield and the Agent to the Governor General, occasionally even at the table of the latter, it became no very difficult matter to gain some insight into the affair; I mean that persons who, like myself, were unconnected with political and commercial matters, could thus become in some degree acquainted with what was going forward: the more so, as the Portuguese of the

place, and the captains and officers of the two English ships in the river were favourably situated for acquiring the fullest information on the subject. From these sources my information has been principally drawn.

CHAPTER V.

INTERVIEW WITH THE PRA-KLANG.—MR. FINLAYSON CALLED UPON TO VISIT A CASE OF CHOLERA IN THE PALACE.—MISSION NOT VISITED BY ANY PERSONS OF RESPECTABILITY.—PARTIES AT THE COURT OF BANKOK.—NOTHING GRANTED IN FAVOUR OF COMMERCE.—AGENT TO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL LEAVES WITHOUT AN AUDIENCE.—BANKOK, THE DWELLINGS MOSTLY FLOATING RAFTS. INHABITANTS MOSTLY CHINESE. MANUFACTURES of TIN, LEATHER, CAST-IRON VESSELS.—BALACHANG.—SIAMESE EAT FLESH, BUT DO NOT KILL. PALACES AND TEMPLES, OR PRACHADIS of BANKOK.—IMAGES OF BUDDHA EXCESSIVELY NUMEROUS.—ANALOGIES BETWEEN THE PYRAMID OF EGYPT AND THE BAUDDHIC DAGOBA.

IT has already been mentioned that the Agent to the Governor General had visited the Prince Chroma-Chit, previously to his introduction to the king. On that occasion, however, neither political nor commercial matters were so much as touched upon, as will be seen by reference to the account of the interview given by Lieutenant Rutherfurd, the prince having merely observed, relative to such matters, that the Praklang would, in ordinary matters, be the medium of communication between them, but that he would at all times receive the Agent to the Governor General.

Sometime after the audience of the king had taken place, the Agent had a second interview

with this prince; but neither on this occasion did the objects of the mission enter into the subjects of conversation, either directly or indirectly.

Mr. Rutherfurd and I accompanied Mr. Crawfurd on this occasion. The interview took place at the particular request of the prince, who also named the hour of audience. We reached his mansion, a dirty and mean-looking building, though spacious within and tolerably well fitted up, at the appointed hour. We were shewn into an open court, at one end of the edifice, as a waiting-room; this place was neither decent nor respectable. A crowd of noisy, dirty, and ill-bred slaves or attendants crowded round the place, or were lolling on the floor, never taking the least notice of us, unless to shew intentional insolence. One or two small rushlights placed upon the floor cast a dim and gloomy light around the room, by the aid of which we could discover in a niche, a number of small wooden images, partly Chinese, and partly Siamese. In this place the Agent to the Governor General was kept waiting upwards of two hours. The chief Suri-Wong happening to come in, stated that the prince was at prayers, and that this was the cause of delay. Yet the hour had been named by the prince himself.

At length, however, it was intimated that the prince was ready to receive the Agent according

to the usual custom of the Siamese; we found him extended upon his back, and rolling about upon a small piece of carpet. He took no notice of us on our entrance; the attendants, who were all prostrate, near to the threshold, directed us to sit down upon a piece of handsome carpet, near to the door, and at a distance from the prince; which might be deemed more than respectful. Mr. Crawfurd's interpreter was not permitted to enter with him, but by perseverance he forced his way near to the door, where he had to undergo many a severe pinch and other insults from the out-door attendants, who wished to drive him away.

The conversation turned upon the government of our Indian possessions, and particularly on that of Ceylon. The prince hearing that I had been in that country, for which they entertain the highest respect, calling it by the name of Lanka, and regarding it as the source from which they have drawn their religion, put numerous questions respecting the state of the Bauddhic religion, the number, size and condition of the temples, pra-chadis and images, as compared with those of Siam.

He then inquired into the state of medicine amongst the people of Europe, asked how many diseases the human body was subject to, whether they all admitted of cure, and so forth. This sort

of conversation lasted for nearly two hours, at the end of which, conceiving probably by our manner that we were heartily tired, both by his questions, as well as by the constrained posture which we were obliged to assume in sitting upon the floor, he told us that we might depart. The conversation of the prince would lead us to infer that he is a man of more curiosity than talent, though in respect to the latter, he did not appear to be particularly defective. He seemed desirous that vaccination should be introduced into the kingdom, and inquired, as it were incidentally, if it were possible to procure a gentleman of the medical profession from Bengal. On being told that such a person might be procured by his writing to the Governor General on the subject, he took no further notice of the matter.

Some time in the course of this month, I was requested to wait upon the prince, about midnight, on account of a lady of rank in the palace, who was said to be labouring under a severe attack of cholera morbus. He expressed his thanks for the promptitude with which I had attended to his request; stating that the person on whose account I had been called was now considered to be somewhat better, and that she had fallen asleep; that however in the course of a few minutes he should receive another report, and begged that I would remain, in order to accom-

pany him to the palace of the king, if the report should be unfavourable. In the meantime he ordered betel, *&c.*, to be laid before me, and commenced a conversation in which he seemed much interested, respecting the sick lady, and our method of cure in this disease. A report came that she was better and still asleep; he asked if the latter circumstance were favourable, and seemed surprised when told that in this disease, in particular, sleep was in general rather apparent than real, and therefore a very fallacious symptom, and to be judged of correctly by actual inspection only. He now shewed great eagerness to obtain some portion of the medicines used in the cure of cholera. In answer to his demands on this subject, I replied that it was necessary I should see the sick person before I could say with accuracy what would be proper for her; that he must necessarily be but imperfectly acquainted with the manner of describing diseases, and that I myself was but very imperfectly acquainted with the language through which we communicated; and that therefore I could not be supposed to acquire very correct information on the subject of the disease in question; and that besides, it happened that medicines which were proper at one period of the disease were hurtful at another.

He was by no means satisfied with these rea-

sons; for after a few minutes he returned to the same subject, saying that he should wish to have some of my medicines by him, to give to his people in the event of their being seized with the complaint. With this request I readily complied, and gave the necessary instructions, which were carefully written down by an attendant. He continued in conversation on this and other subjects, for nearly three hours; when, becoming impatient at this idle and unnecessary occupation of my time, I told him that it was my wish to depart as it did not seem likely that my advice would be required. With this request he complied, again stating his obligations to me, and that he would request me to attend in the morning on the lady, if she should not be better. The poor lady, however, was not destined to see the light of another day. It had happened, as I had forewarned the prince, that after the more violent symptoms of the disease had subsided, she fell into a state of stupor, which the attendants had mistaken for that of sleep, and she never awakened again.

At one period of her illness, they certainly appeared disposed to break through all ceremony, and, for once at least, to admit an European into the interior apartments of the women. The fallacious change which had taken place some time previous to death, seems alone to have prevented them from breaking through the rule.

But to return from this digression, to the objects of the mission. It has been already mentioned that to Chroma-Chit*, an illegitimate son of the reigning king, the commercial affairs of the nation are intrusted; besides which he is inspector of the eastern maritime provinces of Chantibond and Bombasoi. He is but the fourth in point of rank among the king's ministers, though commonly, but erroneously, considered to be the first and even heir to the throne, by the few Europeans who visit Bankok. This notion has arisen from their being unacquainted with the others, with whom, as they have no business to transact, and being for the most part incurious respecting such matters, they have but little chance of becoming acquainted. It was only after repeated inquiry, that we were enabled to ascertain his rank. Of the princes superior in rank to Chroma-Chit, we know nothing but by report, as we have neither visited nor been invited to visit or to meet them, the prince Chroma-Chit and his assistant Suri-Wong being the only persons of any rank whom we obtained an opportunity of visiting. Neither did any persons of respectability visit us, unless we might by

* This prince, it is understood, has since succeeded to the throne, and commenced his reign by allowing a general freedom of commerce to his subjects and foreigners, except in the articles of fire-arms, opium, and some few royal monopolies, which are still retained.

chance induce them in passing to step into our rooms, or unless they wished to procure medicines, which was sometimes the case. We had anticipated this circumstance, and were not therefore much surprised at being left so much to ourselves.

It had been well for the success of the mission, if our acquaintance had not extended to persons of meaner condition. But from what has been already stated, it will be seen, that persons, destitute alike of rank, of respectability, of authority, and above all of honesty and good faith, were left to conduct the affairs of the mission with the British Agent. This was but a sorry compliment to the government of Bengal, which, with a degree of liberality equalled only by its disinterested conduct, held forth to the Siamese far greater advantages than it asked for its own subjects.

The Siamese are too low in the scale of nations to be able to form a just estimate of the advantages of friendly intercourse with such a government. It is to be suspected too that the mean-spirited and grovelling persons who conduct the commerce of the kingdom, have greatly thwarted the objects of the mission, by misrepresenting its real views. What else was to be expected of such men as the Malay Kochai, and a tribe of exiled and emigrant natives of the

coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, whose interests depend solely upon the exclusion of Europeans from the country; or at least upon the prevention of a free trade.

Yet it was with such persons chiefly, I might almost say exclusively, that the negotiations had been carried on; with the exception of a few interviews with the Pra-Klang. Even the Prince Chroma-Chit, much less the other ministers of the government or the king, obtained nothing directly from the British Agent, but always through the medium of others, and generally through Kochai Sahac. Mr. Crawfurd at length discovered that this man was totally unworthy of his confidence, and that his conduct was altogether worthless, but it was now unfortunately too late. The cunning and duplicity of Kochai were calculated to deceive. He is in fact an agent employed only for mean purposes, and to agitate affairs which his principals might consider discreditable to themselves. It might, doubtless, have been foreseen that nothing liberal or honest could come from such a quarter. It had been well, too, to have rejected all communication with agents of such inferior rank and worthless conduct. They are apt to injure national as well as individual character.

It must be confessed, however, that it is no easy task to conduct affairs to a favourable ter-

mination with such people as the Siamese; and that it is much more easy to detect difficulties than to surmount them; to discover errors than to obviate or to remedy them. We arrived in the country ignorant of the manners of the people, and of the state of political opinion; for even in this despotic government the spirit of party is not unknown. That knowledge which we subsequently acquired would, doubtless, have been of the first importance to the British Agent, had he possessed it on landing in Siam.

The history of past negotiations is sufficient to prove that neither privileges, nor immunities, nor advantages of any kind, are to be gained from the Ultra-Gangetic nations, by submission, by condescension, or even by conciliation, or by flattery. They despise the former as a proof of weakness; the latter, as arguing a mean spirit. Threats and aggression are neither justifiable nor necessary. A dignified, yet unassuming conduct, jealous of its own honour, open and disinterested, seeking its own advantage, but willing to promote that of others, will doubtless effect much with nations of this stamp of character, and must in the end be able to accomplish the object desired.

It deserves to be mentioned that the king's ministers are divided into two parties. The Prince Chroma-Chit, enriched by the commerce

of the nation, and supported by the influence which the management of the treasury has thrown into his hands, stands at the head of one party, and exerts a degree of influence in the councils of the king, to which his rank alone does not appear to entitle him. He is more feared than beloved or respected by the people. He and his party are more remarkable for their wealth, than for respectability. They are well disposed to extend the limits of foreign commerce, as bringing the means of increasing their own power and influence, but they are either too ignorant or too weak to effect this on sound principles. The other and more respectable party, consisting of the princes Chroma-Lecong, chief judge, Chroma Khun, minister of the interior, and Chau-Chroma-Sac, commander of the forces, entertain no very exalted opinions of the advantages of commerce in general, oppose the plans of the others, and are unwilling to lay aside their ancient prejudices.

The business of the mission, as has been already observed, was agitated in detail with the Malay Kochai. It is stated that Mr. Crawfurd drew up a treaty consisting of thirty-nine articles. These were listened to with great attention, and it seemed as if matters were going on very successfully for the mission. After they had all been agitated, however, they were suc-

cessively thrown aside, till nothing whatever remained of the treaty which could be interpreted into a concession in favour of commerce, unless we consider the reduction of the duties, one or two per cent., as deserving of that appellation; and even this paltry matter they refused flatly on the very first occasion, by telling Mr. Storm, when concluding some commercial transactions with them, that they would not reduce the duties until five English ships should visit the port annually, or until after the lapse of a specified number of years.

This was in fact the *coup-de-grace*.

Nothing whatever had been granted in favour of commerce. The business of the mission had now come to an end.

It was stated by Mr. Crawfurd, that the king was to grant an interview to the Agent of the Governor General on his taking leave. We have heard nothing further of this matter. It is the acknowledged custom of the court to grant such interview *. The ambassador from Cochin

* For an account of the embassy in 1685, from Louis XIV. to the court of Siam, the reader may consult the work of the jesuit Tachard; Des Farges' relation of the revolutions in Siam in 1688; Extracts from a voyage with the armament of M. du Quesne, in 1690; and also the Memoirs of Couut Forbin, and the Universal History. The French interest was chiefly indebted for the favourable reception and lofty honours with which the monarch of Siam was pleased to honour his good friends and faithful allies,

China had obtained his audience of leave, and dropped down the river this day, (11th June,) on his return home.

The king of Siam did not condescend to return a written answer to the Governor-General of British India. It was stated that the Pra-klang would write to him, on which Mr. Crawfurd represented that in this case the letter must be addressed to the secretary of government.

It now appeared, however, that this office was delegated to a person of still inferior rank, the Pra-klang's assistant, Pya-pee-pat Ko-sa. This letter was written in the Siamese and Portuguese languages. That in the latter was shewn to me by the writer. It went merely to specify, that Mr. Crawfurd had brought presents and a letter from the Governor General. That the tenor of this letter stated that England had enjoyed profound peace for some years past,—that Bengal did so also,—that the Governor General was desirous to contract friendship with the king of Siam,—that all British ports were as free to the Siamese as to our own subjects. In reply, the letter from Pya-pee-pat stated that British vessels

the Chevalier de Chaumont and suite, to the good offices of Constantine Phaulkon, prime minister of Siam, a native of Cephalonia, who had commenced his career in the service of the English company. Can we imagine that the events of those days are forgotten by the statesmen of Siam?

may at all times visit Bankok ; but nothing was said of privileges, or freedom of commerce, or even of the reduction of duties.

The Chuliahs and Portuguese, or rather the descendants of the latter, were assembled at the house of the Pra-klang, to deliver this letter to the Agent of the Governor General, but neither the Pra-klang himself, nor even his assistant, attended. It would appear that there was something informal in the letter, or that they would not give the letter written in the Siamese language. It had not, therefore, been as yet delivered over to the British agent.

June 11*th*.—The. Cochin Chinese ambassador and suite passed down the river, in two praus, adorned with numerous standards, on their return to their country.

June 12*th*.—It had been reported for several days back, and occasionally stated by Mr. Crawfurd, that the delay which has occurred in the delivery of the letters to the British mission, had led the Siamese government to consider further of the matter, and that they now intended to grant documents, in the form of a commercial treaty. In the course of the evening of this day, the documents alluded to were produced, and delivered to the Agent in our presence. They consisted of the Siamese and Portuguese letters formerly alluded to, the

former wrapped up in silk, and sealed, intended to be delivered to Mr. Prinsep; the other, said to be an exact translation of the former, was open, and intended for the inspection of the Agent of the Governor General. To these were now added a brief letter, also in Siamese and Portuguese, from the Pia-chulah, the head chuliah or moorman of the place, inferior in rank to Pya-pee-pat, and an under-collector of the customs. This was addressed to Mr. Crawfurd, and a sealed copy was sent for Mr. Prinsep. This states merely that English ships will be received into the port, on their complying with the usual rules, landing their guns and small arms at Bankok, paying the usual export and import duties, and port charges. That the Pia-chulah will assist them in disposing of their cargoes; and that no more than the usual duties will be exacted.

June 17*th.*—Sufficient time had elapsed since we arrived in this place, to have enabled us to gain a tolerable acquaintance with the city and its environs. Unfortunately, however, for my pursuits, it had so happened, that I was able to turn this tedious and irksome delay to little advantage; for having been seized with a slight bilious fever on the passage from the coast of Borneo to that of Cambodia, which was soon after followed by an attack of pneumonia,

attended with several relapses, I have been reduced to the necessity of keeping much at home. A few visits to the city have been all that we have yet accomplished. The country affords but little facility for walking, or travelling in any way, so that we have been able to penetrate but a mile or two in any direction, except by water. All attempts to proceed into the interior, and even to Yuthia, have been jealously watched, and our requests have been carefully evaded, though not directly refused. Thus situated, we are but ill qualified as yet to speak of the agriculture of the country, or the condition of the peasantry. Frequent conversations with respectable individuals among the natives, together with what we have ourselves occasionally seen, have given us some insight into the habits of the people, their manners, their laws, their religion, &c.

Bankok, as being the capital of the kingdom, deserves to be more particularly mentioned. Though but of modern date, it has become the chief city in the kingdom, a distinction which it owes chiefly to its having been rendered the seat of government, by the Chinese king Pia-tac. Previous to his time, the place was of little importance, and noted chiefly for the excellence of its fruits, which were sent in great abundance to Yuthia, at that time the capital.

The capture and plunder of the ancient city

by the Barmans, together with the disastrous events which followed, induced many of the inhabitants to abandon the place. Pia-tac collecting the scattered remains of the dispirited inhabitants around him, was soon in a condition to establish a new city. The site of Bankok offered several advantages over that of Yuthia. He constructed a fort on the right bank of the river, the walls of which, as well as his palace, if a building of such wretched appearance deserve that name, are still to be seen. The successes of Pia-tac, in his wars against the Barmans, enabled him to realize his views with regard to Bankok. Since this time it has constantly been on the increase. The successors of Pia-tac have had it equally in view to aggrandize the place. They have built several new palaces, and other public buildings; but the edifices on which the greatest care, labour, and expense, have been bestowed, are the temples, including the usual ornamental building, called Pra-chadi, of a spiral form, probably the sepulchral monument of Buddha. The palace of the present king is situated on the left bank of the river, nearly opposite to the old palace of Pia-tac, upon an island from two to three miles in length, though of inconsiderable breadth. The palace, and indeed almost the whole of this island is surrounded by a wall, in some parts of considerable height, here and there furnished

with indifferent-looking bastions, and provided with numerous gates both towards the river and on each side. Both the king and several of his ministers reside within this space. The persons attached to the court are very numerous, and also reside here, in wretched huts made of palm-leaves. There is, in fact, but little distinction between this place, and other parts of the town, except it be that you see few Chinese there, and that the shops are of inferior quality. The greater part, however, of the space included by the wall, consists of waste ground, swamps, and fruit-gardens.

The city is continuous with the palace, extending on both sides of the river to the distance of three or four miles; it lies principally on the left bank, and the most populous as well as the wealthiest part lies nearly opposite to the house of the Pra-klang, but a little lower down. The town is built entirely of wood, the palaces of the king, the temples and the houses of a few chiefs being alone constructed of brick or mud walls. The mildness of the climate, the cheapness of the materials used in building, and the few effects of which the natives are possessed, render them indifferent to the destructive ravages of fire. The ruin occasioned by this element they regard with perfect indifference. From the great length which the city occupies along the banks of the

river, it might be supposed to be a place of vast extent: this, however, is not the case. The Siamese may be said to be aquatic in their disposition. The houses rarely extend more than one or two hundred yards from the river, and by far the greater number of them are floating on bamboo rafts secured close to the bank. The houses that are not so floated are built on posts driven into the mud, and raised above the bank, a precaution rendered necessary both by the diurnal flow of the tides, and the annual inundations to which the country is subject. It has been said that there are but few, I had almost said, no roads or even pathways. To every house, floating or not, there is attached a boat, generally very small, for the use of the family. There is little travelling but what is performed by water, and hence the arms both of the women and men acquire a large size from the constant habit of rowing.

The few streets that Bankok boasts are passable on foot only in dry weather: the principal shops, however, and the most valuable merchandise, are found along the river in the floating-houses. These floating-houses are occupied almost exclusively by Chinese. In the most populous parts of the town the latter would appear to constitute at least three-fourths of the whole population; and if we were to form an

estimate of those that are to be seen at all hours moving up and down the river in boats of various kinds, often forming a very animated scene, the proportion would be still greater on the side of the Chinese. There are but very few parts of Bankok where the Chinese do not appear to exceed the natives in number. The greatest uniformity prevails in the appearance of the houses—a handsome spire here and there serves to enliven the view; and these are the only ornaments which can be said to produce this effect, for the singular architecture displayed in the construction of the temples and palaces can hardly be considered in this light.

A more particular account of the floating-houses has been given above: like every other building in the place, they consist of one floor only. The houses generally have a neat appearance; they are, for the most part, thatched with palm-leaves, but sometimes with tiles. They are divided into several small apartments, of which the Chinese always allot the central one for the reception of their household gods. The shops, forming one side of the house, being shut up at night, are converted into sleeping apartments. The whole is disposed with the greatest economy of space: even the narrow virandas in front, on which are usually disposed jars of water, pots with herbs and plants, bundles

of firewood, &c. They have become so habituated to this sort of aquatic life, as scarcely to experience any inconvenience from it. The walls and floors of the houses are formed of boards, and considering the nature of the climate, such buildings afford very comfortable shelter. The houses of the common people are equally wretched in appearance with those of a common bazar in India. Those occupied by the Chinese are in general neater and more comfortable. The latter people are not only the principal merchants, but the only artificers in the place. The most common trades are those of tin-smith, blacksmith, and currier. The manufacture of tin vessels is very considerable, and the utensils being polished bright, and often of very handsome forms, give an air of extreme neatness to the shops in which they are displayed. Were it not for the very extraordinary junction of the trade of currier, such places might readily be mistaken for silversmiths' shops. The occupations just mentioned are carried on in the same shop conjointly, and by the same individuals. The preparation of leather is carried on to a great extent, not for the purpose of making shoes, which are scarcely used, but for covering mattresses and pillows, and for exportation to China. After tanning, the leather is dyed red with the bark, I believe, of a species of Mimosa. The

hides used are principally those of the deer, which are to be had in the greatest abundance. Besides these, they use that of the ox and buffalo. Leopards', tigers' skins, *&c.*, are preserved with the fur on, and exported to China. There are, in the place, one or two manufactories of shallow cast-iron pots, also conducted by Chinese: the process is extremely simple, and the articles are sold remarkably cheap. From the practice of these and other trades, the Chinese derive a very handsome livelihood; they are consequently enabled to procure more generous food than the natives. It is even a common boast with the labourers of this class, that they live better than the first chiefs of the country. Their food, however, is gross and rich to excess; pork is their principal and favourite diet, oil is reckoned scarce less savoury, and their vegetables are invariably brought to table floating in a sea of fat. A Chinese thus expends more money on eating, in one week, than a Siamese in two or three months, and his superior industry will enable him to do so.

The food of the Siamese consists chiefly of rice, which is eaten with a substance called Balachang, a strange compound of things savoury and loathsome; but in such general use, that no one thinks of eating without some portion of it. Religion offers but a feeble barrier against the

desire to eat animal food, and the Siamese easily satisfy their conscience on this score. They conceive that they have obeyed the injunction of the law, when they themselves have not killed the animals. They do not hesitate to purchase fish, fowls, *&c.*, alive in the market, desiring the seller to slay them before he delivers them over, well contented that the crime must remain attached to the latter. Their devotion, at times, goes the length of inducing them to purchase numbers of living fish for the purpose of turning them loose again, and the king has often in this manner given liberty to all the fish caught on a particular day. Yet the privilege of fishing is sold by the king to the highest bidder, and from this source he derives a very considerable annual revenue. The Siamese, however, are more choice in their food, and less indulgent of their appetites than the Chinese.

The town derives but little architectural ornament from the state of its public buildings, if we except the sacred edifice called Pra-cha-di. The palaces are buildings of inconsiderable size individually, in the Chinese style, covered with a diminishing series of three or four tiled roofs, sometimes terminated by a small spire, and more remarkable for singularity than for beauty. The palace of the king is covered with tin tiles.

Many of the temples cover a large extent of

ground; they are placed in the most elevated and best situations, surrounded by brick walls or bamboo hedges, and the enclosure contains numerous rows of buildings, disposed in straight lines. They consist of one spacious, and in general lofty hall, with narrow but numerous doors and windows. Both the exterior and interior are studded over with a profusion of minute and singular ornaments of the most varied description. It is on the ends, and not on the sides of the exterior of the building, that the greatest care has been bestowed in the disposition of the ornaments. A profusion of gilding, bits of looking glass, China basins of various colours, stuck into the plaster, are amongst the most common materials. The floor of the temple is elevated several feet above the ground, and generally boarded or paved, and covered with coarse mats.

The fabulous stories of Hindu theology figure in all the absurdity that gave them birth, upon the interior walls. The wildest imagination would seem to have guided the artist's hand; yet here and there he has portrayed, by accident, perhaps, more than by design, human passions with a degree of spirit and of truth worthy of better subjects. Notwithstanding the great demand there is for painting in this way, the circumstance is singular and remarkable, that this divine art should not only continue

in its infancy among them, but that their performances should not even indicate a capacity of attaining to greater flights. If, as some believe, Asia has given birth to the arts, the experience of ages has proved that she is quite incapable of carrying them to perfection.

Here, for the first time, did I observe obscene paintings in a temple dedicated to Buddha. In Ceylon they would have been deemed altogether profane. We were amused to find suspended in a very handsome temple, two coarse paintings of French ladies, in rural costume.

At one end of the temple a sort of altar is raised, on which is placed the principal figure of Buddha, surrounded by innumerable lesser ones, and by those of priests; and here and there is disposed the figure of a deceased king, distinguished by his tall conical cap, peculiar physiognomy, and rich costume. The figures of Buddha have a cast of the Tartar countenance, particularly the eye of that race. They are very commonly disfigured by having tattered umbrellas of cloth or paper suspended over the head, or tied to it, and by having rags of dirty cloth wrapped round them, it being reckoned devout to deck the statues in this way; though as the images are all gilt, and in general well cast, this gives them a very sorry appearance. It will scarcely be credited how numerous the

images of Buddha are in the temples. They are disposed with unsparing profusion on the altar, of all sizes, from one inch to thirty feet in height. In the outer courts of the temple they are disposed in still greater number. The arrangement observed in the temple called Wāat-thay-champonn, may be given as an instance of what occurs in the rest.

This consists of a number of temples, Pra-cha-dis *, and buildings allotted for the accommodation of priests, enclosed in an ample square, rather more than a quarter of a mile on each side. The principal temples are further surrounded by a piazza open only towards the temple, and about twelve or fifteen feet in breadth, and well paved. Against the back wall, a stout platform of masonry extends round the temple, on which are placed gilded figures of Buddha, for the most part considerably larger than the human size, and so close to each other as to leave no vacant place on the platform. Of these statues the greater number are made of cast iron, others are made of brass, others of wood or of clay, and all with careful uniformity. Several hundreds of such images are thus seen at one glance of the eye. In other and less spacious passages, minor figures, chiefly of clay or wood, are heaped together in endless numbers. They

* Literally the roof of the Pra or Lord.

would appear to accumulate so fast, that it seems probable the priests are at times reduced to the necessity of demolishing hosts of them.

From what has been said, it will be seen that images are here manufactured in vast numbers. The expense in gilding alone, for every image is gilt, must be great. Some are of enormous size; in this temple there is one about thirty feet high. The attendants attempted to persuade us that it was made of copper, but the application of the knife proved it to be of hard wood in different pieces. This statue is erect, and stands alone in a building apparently erected as a covering for it. The more common posture in which Buddha is represented is that of sitting cross-legged, in a contemplative attitude, the soles of the feet turned up. In other instances he is reclining on a pillow, the attitude also contemplative. These three are the only postures in which the natives of Ceylon represent him. Here he is to be seen asleep, and, as I have been told, there are even some figures that represent him as dead.

The minor arrangements of the temples are hardly deserving of notice. The apartments allotted for the accommodation of the priests are clean, neat, substantial, and comfortable, without ornament or superfluity.

The Pra-cha-di of the temple called Wāāt-

thay-cham-ponn, is the handsomest of the kind in Bankok, and indeed deserving of notice on account of its architectural beauty.

The Pra-cha-di, called, by the Bauddhists of Ceylon, Dagoba, is a solid building of masonry, without aperture or inlet of any sort, however large it may be. It is generally built in the neighbourhood of some temple, but is not itself an object or a place of worship, being always distinct from the temple itself*. In its

* The design of the small chambers in the Pyramids of Egypt has been variously explained; some considering them as sepulchral depositories, and others as the adyta of the more sacred and retired mysteries. The truth possibly may be that each conjecture is correct, and that in the office of a sepulchral shrine, as well as in form, the Pyramid and the Dagoba exactly coincide.

Among the Mackenzie collection in the Library of the Honourable East India Company, is a volume of drawings representing the ruins of Amarawati, an ancient city on the Kishna river, in which the form of the interior of the Dagoba, or sepulchre of Buddha is amply illustrated.

Several circumstances and ceremonies in the religion of Buddha would seem to identify its origin, in a great measure, with that of ancient Egypt. The physiognomy, the form, and the stature of Buddha are as distinctly Ethiopic as they are different from those which characterize the various tribes which inhabit either the western or eastern parts of the Asiatic continent. That it is a religion foreign to Asia, the uncertainty which still exists with regard to the country or district which gave it birth would seem to render probable. The proofs which have been brought forward in favour of Ceylon, and of Magadha, would seem to rest upon very slender foundations. Several festivals in this religion bear a strong resemblance to the ceremonies performed by the ancient Egyptians on the rising of the Nile. That called Periharah is of this nature. The Pyramids of

origin, it would appear to have been sepulchral, and destined to commemorate either the death of Buddha, or his translation into heaven. Even at the present time, these ornamental buildings are thought to contain some relic of Buddha. This one in particular makes a light and handsome appearance: the lower part consists of a series of dodecahedral terraces, diminishing gradually to nearly one half of the whole height, where they are succeeded by a handsome spire, fluted longitudinally, and ornamented with numerous circular mouldings. The minor ornaments are numerous, and towards the summit there is a small globe of glass. The total height would

Egypt, are they not the prototype of the Dagobah, or Pra-cha-di? Instead of considering these stupendous monuments of human labour as the tombs of earthly kings, ought we not rather to regard them as owing their origin to religious motives? It is scarcely possible to believe that any other motive could induce men to undertake or to execute works of such magnitude. The small chambers found in the interior of some of them might have contained, or at least had been intended to contain relics, such as bones of their deity. This conjecture receives confirmation from Sir Everard Home's account of those bones which he examined at the desire of Lieutenant-Colonel Fitzclarence, and which, when compared with the skeletons in the Hunterian Museum, were decidedly those of the Bos genus. These bones were found in the sarcophagus of the pyramid of Cephrenes. See *Fitzclarence's Route through India and Egypt to England*, page 499. In addition it may be remarked, that Mnevis and Apis, the sacred bulls, were considered as emblems of the God of Justice, and that Dharma Rajah, or the King of Justice, is a very common appellative of Buddha.—*Editor.*

appear to be about two hundred and fifty feet from the ground.

Minor edifices of this sort are common in every temple. They are in general raised upon a base of twelve sides, but sometimes of eighteen.

We have no accurate data to enable us to estimate the population of Bankok. It has been stated that the Chinese constitute at least one-half of the whole. The remainder is composed of Siamese, native christians of this place and of Cambodia, Barmans, Peguers, and natives of the Malay islands and of Laos*. These occupy distinct portions of the town, and associate only with each other.

* Laou or Laos is the country north of Siam Proper, and immediately adjoining the southern border of the Chinese province of Yunnan; from this circumstance, from the reported difference of language, and from the boundary of Siam not including the Northern Laos, the people of Laos are, in all probability, nationally distinct from the Siamese.

CHAPTER VI.

Physical form and character of the Siamese.—Manners and Customs.—Treatment of the dead, and funereal obsequies of the Monarch.—Laws.—Adultery.--Theft. History.—State of defence.—Revenue.—Siamese numerals.—Kalendar.—Annual festival at the close of the year.—Religion.—Laws of Buddha.—Province of Chantibond the richest portion of the territory of Siam.—Its products.—Mines of gold and of precious stones.—Zoological remarks.

I have already, on more than one occasion, briefly alluded to the physical form of the Siamese. At present I shall make such observations as more extensive experience has enabled me to collect.

That the Siamese are one of the numerous tribes which constitute that great and singular family of the human race, known generally by the appellation of Mongols, will appear to most persons sufficiently obvious. If they do not possess, in the most acute degree, the peculiar features of the original, they are at least stamped with traits sufficiently just to entitle them to be considered as copies. There is, however, one general and well-marked form, common to all the tribes lying between China and Hindostan. Under this head are comprehended the inhabi-

tants of Ava, Pegu, Siam, Cambodia, and even of Cochin-China, though those of the latter country more resemble the Chinese than the others. This distinctive character is so strongly blended with the Mongol features that we have no hesitation in considering these nations as deriving their origin from that source. It appears to me that to this source also we ought to refer the Malays*, who cannot be said to possess national characters, at least of physiognomy and physical form, sufficiently distinct and obvious to entitle them to be considered as a distinct race. Where there is a difference between the Malays and the tribes mentioned, it is more to be referred to the condition of the mental faculty,

* If we compare the Malays with the more acute forms of the Tartar race, with the Chinese on the one hand, or with the Arabs or Hindoos that frequent their islands, on the other, we may be disposed to consider them as forming a different race. Their affinity with the Indo-Chinese nations, whom we have every reason to consider as of Tartar origin, is, however, quite unequivocal; and it is through this medium, it appears to me, that we ought to trace their filiation. The sea-coasts of the peninsula of Malacca, Sumatra, and a few other places in that neighbourhood, will be found to afford the best forms illustrative of the character of this tribe; as for instance, the people called *Orang Laut*. In the better-cultivated islands, the physical form is much modified, as well as the manners, by intermixture with other tribes; probably with those who preceded them in the possession of the country. Let the inhabitants of the places referred to be compared, not directly with the Chinese, but with the Siamese, Barmans, &c., and little doubt will be entertained as to the probable origin of this people.

than to that of bodily form; to the state of manners, habits of life, language; in short to circumstances altogether, or in great part, produced by mind. In other respects they would appear to differ but little from the tribes mentioned above. Traces of a much ruder people are to be met with in the mountainous districts of these kingdoms, particularly in the peninsula of Malacca. Our knowledge of these is much too scanty to enable us to trace their filiation. Though generally asserted, there are no records to prove that they are the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, at least of any other part of it than the wilds and impenetrable forests which they continue to occupy. The woolly-headed race, and another resembling the Indian, are not uncommon*. Their origin will probably ever remain uncertain.

The following observations will be found to

* A comparison of languages, both in the grammar and vocabulary, may yet produce much light on the interesting subject of the family origin of nations. A comparative vocabulary of some of the Indo-Chinese languages was published by the lamented Dr. John Leyden; to render such a compilation perfect, it should embrace, not merely the more obvious dialects, but those of the inland recesses. Is there any affinity between the language of the tribes who inhabit the hilly wildernesses of the Goand country, of Rajemahal and Malwa, and those similarly situated on the Malay peninsula, Kassai and Asam?—or extending the investigation, do any ancient languages of the east bear affinity to those of Ethiopia or Africa?—*Ed.*

apply to the several nations already mentioned, and in general to the Chinese also, whom I consider as the prototype of the whole race. A multitude of forms are to be seen in every nation, not referable to any particular family or variety of the human race. For our present purpose, we must select such only as possess the peculiar form in the most characteristic degree. But as all the requisites of this form are not always developed in a very acute degree in all, we must collect from a multitude of instances, what appears to be the predominating tendency. In this way we may make out a portrait of the whole.

The stature of the body would appear to be much alike in all the tribes of the Mongol race, the Chinese being perhaps a little taller, and the Malays lower than the others. In all it is below that of the Caucasian race. The average height of the Siamese, ascertained by actual measurement of a considerable number of individuals, amounts to five feet three inches.

The skin is of a lighter colour than in the generality of Asiatics to the west of the Ganges; by far the greater number being of a yellow complexion, a colour which, in the higher ranks, and particularly amongst women and children, they take pleasure in heightening by the use of a bright yellow wash or cosmetic, so that their

bodies are often rendered of a golden colour. The texture of the skin is remarkably smooth, soft, and shining.

Throughout the whole race there is a strong tendency towards obesity. The nutritious fluids of the body are principally directed towards the surface, distending and overloading the cellular tissue with an inordinate quantity of fat. The muscular textures are in general soft, lax, and flabby, rarely exhibiting that strength or developement of outline which marks the finer forms of the human body. In labourers and mechanics, particularly the Chinese, the muscular parts occasionally attain considerable volume, but very rarely the hardness and elasticity developed by exercise in the European race. On a simple inspection, we are apt to form exaggerated notions respecting their muscular strength, and capacity for labour. A more close examination discovers the reality, and we find that something more than volume is necessary to constitute vigour of arm.

In point of size, the limbs are often equal to, if not larger than those of Europeans, particularly the thighs, but this magnitude of volume will be found to depend upon the cause alluded to above. The same circumstance gives to the whole body a disproportionate bulk; and hence they form what is called a squat race.

The face is remarkably broad and flat, the cheek-bones prominent, large, spreading, and gently rounded. The glabellum is flat and unusually large. The eyes are in general small. The aperture of the eye-lids, moderately linear in the Indo-Chinese nations and Malays, is acutely so in the Chinese, bending upward at its exterior termination. The lower jaw is long, and remarkably full under the zygoma, so as to give to the countenance a square appearance. The nose is rather small than flat, the alæ not being distended in any uncommon degree; in a great number of Malays, however, it is largest towards the point. The mouth is large, and the lips thick. The beard is remarkably scanty, consisting only of a few straggling hairs. The forehead, though broad in the lateral direction, is in general narrow, the hairy scalp descending very low. The head is peculiar. The diameter from the front backwards is uncommonly short; and hence the general form is somewhat cylindrical. The occipital foramen in a great number of instances is placed so far back, that from the crown to the nape of the neck is nearly a straight line. The top of the head is often unusually flat. The hair is thick, coarse, and lank, in some shewing a disposition to curl on the forehead, but this is more peculiar to the Malays. The colour is always black.

The limbs are thick, short and stout, and the arms rather disproportionate in length to the body.

The arms, particularly in Malays, are uncommonly long. The foot is, in general small, but the hand is much larger than in the natives of Bengal.

The trunk is rather square, being nearly as broad at the loins as over the pectoral muscles. There is in this respect the greatest difference between them and the inhabitants of either India, who are in general remarkable for small waists. The diameter of the pelvis is particularly large, and the dimensions of the cavity would appear to be somewhat greater than in the other races.

From this account of their form, they would appear to be admirably calculated to execute and to undergo the more toilsome and laborious, but mechanical, operations which are the usual lot of the labouring classes of mankind. They have the frame, without the energy of London porters. The greater number of them are indeed more distinguished for mechanical skill, and patience under laborious occupations, than for brightness of imagination or mental capacity. Others of them are equally remarkable for indolence and aversion to labour.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE SIAMESE.

TREATMENT OF THE DEAD.

The treatment of the dead is not amongst the least singular of the customs peculiar to the Siamese. It is more or less expensive according to the rank which the individual held in the community, or the ability of his relations. The poorest amongst them are negligently and without ceremony thrown into the river. Those a little higher in the scale of society are burnt; often very imperfectly, and their partially-consumed bones are left to bleach on the plain, or to be devoured by ravenous beasts. Children, before the age of dentition, are interred in a superficial grave, to one end of which an upright board is attached. Women who have died pregnant are interred in a similar manner. After the lapse of a few months, however, their remains are taken up for the purpose of being burnt.

With the exceptions mentioned, the practice of burning the dead extends to all ranks. The ceremony may be witnessed almost daily in the environs, and within the precincts of the temples. The latter are generally provided with a lofty shed, of a pyramidal form, open on all sides, and supported on tall wooden posts, of sufficient

height to admit of the combustion of the body without injury to the roof. Nor is even this simple shed common to all. The avarice of the priesthood, taking advantage of the weaker feelings of the human mind, has even here established distinctions at which death mocks. The poorer sort, therefore, raise the pile at a humble distance from the roof of pride.

A singular custom takes place in many instances previous to the ceremony of combustion. It is that of cutting the muscular and soft parts of the body into innumerable small pieces, until nothing is left of the corpse but the bare bones. The flesh thus cut up is thrown to dogs, vultures, and other carnivorous birds, which on this account resort to such places in great numbers. We found one of those pyramids covered with vultures, and the enclosure much frequented by dogs. The scene was loathsome and disgusting in the extreme, and sufficiently attested the prevalence of this custom. The practice is looked upon as charitable and laudable, and the Siamese arrogate to themselves no small share of merit in thus disposing of the body as food, the material of life, to the beasts of the field, and to the birds of the air. It seems probable that this singular practice is connected with their notions of a future existence, and may have derived its origin in some way from the ancient doctrine of

Metempsychosis,' so strongly inculcated by their religion *.

A different custom prevails among the higher orders of Siamese, which, considering that the body is finally destined to be consumed by fire, is as unaccountable as the other is barbarous and unfeeling. The custom I allude to is that of embalming the dead. But what seems most singular in this custom is, that the body has no sooner undergone that degree of preparation which renders it capable of being preserved for a longer period, than it is destined to be totally consumed. Were it not for this apparent inconsistency, we should have little hesitation in attributing the origin of this practice to that warmth of filial affection, and the well known devotion to their ancestors, for which the Chinese are so remarkable.

The art of embalming, as known to the Siamese, is extremely imperfect, notwithstanding that it has been practised from very ancient times. Its actual state is characteristic of that general ignorance of the ornamental, as well as of the useful

* A custom somewhat similar is not unknown to the Bauddhists of Ceylon. During [the late war in that country, a chief of some rank was sentenced to undergo the punishment of death by decapitation. It was intimated to him that government would not prevent his relations from rendering to his body the funeral rights of his country. He replied that it was his desire that his body might be left to be devoured by the jackals and other wild beasts.

arts of civilized life, which I have already hinted at on several occasions.

The process is for the most part left to the relations of the deceased, who call in the assistance of the more experienced.

After washing the body with water, the first step is to pour a large quantity of crude mercury into the mouth. Persons of the highest rank alone, however, can have recourse to a material so expensive. The others substitute honey in its stead, but it is said with a less favourable result. The body is now placed in a kneeling posture, and the hands are brought together before the face, in the attitude of devotion. Narrow strips of cloth are then bound tightly round the extremities, and the body is compressed in a similar manner. The object of the ligatures is to squeeze the moisture out of the body. They act also in preserving the required posture, and with this object the more flexile tendons of the extremities are divided. In this posture the body is next placed in an air-tight vessel of wood, brass, silver, or gold, according to the rank of the deceased. A tube, or hollow bamboo, inserted into the mouth of the deceased, passes through the upper part of the box, and is conducted through the roof of the house to a considerable height. A similar bamboo is placed in the bottom, and terminates in a vessel placed under it to receive the draining

off from the body. If the deceased is of the rank of a prince, the sordes thus collected is conveyed with great formality and state, in a royal barge, highly ornamented, to be deposited at a particular part of the river below the city. That collected from the body of the king is put into a vessel, and boiled until an oil separates, which oil is carefully collected, and with this they, on certain occasions, (as when his descendants and those of his family go to pay their devotions to his departed spirit), anoint the singular image called Sema, usually placed in the temple after his death.

Notwithstanding the precaution of using the tubes and the tight box, the odour, it is said, is often most offensive. In a few weeks, however, it begins to diminish, and the body becomes shriveled and quite dry.

The body thus prepared by this rude process is, at the proper period, brought forth to be burnt, the relations having in the mean time made every necessary arrangement for the solemn occasion. Early in the morning a number of priests are assembled at the house of the deceased; having received robes of yellow cloth, and been feasted, they repeat prayers in the Pali language, after which the body is carried forth to be burned. The priests receive the body as it approaches the temple, and conducting it towards the pile,

repeat a verse in the Pali language, which has been thus interpreted to me:

> Eheu! mortale corpus,
> Ut fumus hic nunc ascendit, sic et
> Animus tuus ascendat in cœlum *.

After the body has been destroyed, the ashes, or rather the small fragments of bone which remain, are carefully collected, and the use that is made of them is somewhat singular. The priests are again called in; prayers are again repeated in the Pali language, and various requisite ceremonies are performed, after which the ashes which had been collected after combustion, are reduced to a paste with water, and formed into a small figure of Buddha, which being gilded, and finished by the priests, is either placed in the temple, or preserved by the friends of the deceased.

This last ceremony is attended with considerable expense, and, therefore, the poorer orders, when unable to engage priests for its performance, keep the ashes of their relations by them, until they are in a condition to have it carried into effect in a becoming manner.

It must be confessed, that in matters of this sort, the Siamese shew the greatest regard to the memory of their relations and ancestors. Where death and its dread apparatus are thus brought

* Ah! mortal is the body, as now ascends this smoke,
So may thy soul ascend to heaven.

daily home to the feelings,—where the mind is accustomed to view the disgusting and humiliating phenomena that attend the last scene of mortality, it might be thought that a stupid insensibility, if not scornful indifference, would be the general result. We have no reason to believe that such is the case with the Siamese. The care and attention they have bestowed upon the remains of their relations, seem but to endear their memory the more to them. The fear of death is, besides, of that nature, that neither the most deliberate reason, nor the most obtuse feeling, can lay it altogether aside. On the minds of the multitude more especially, this fear operates strongly, and produces effects in proportion to their degree of intelligence. Where there is already a strong tendency towards superstition, this bias is still more heightened, and there are perhaps few nations more strongly imbued with this sentiment than the Siamese; and, in general, all the tribes of Mongol origin. With them judicial astrology still holds the rank of the most important of sciences, and is cultivated with the most scrupulous attention. Its pretended results are required on all important occasions, either of a public or a private nature. Nor are the most gross and revolting superstitions confined to the vulgar, as the following anecdote respecting the present Pra-klang, Suree-wong Montree, will shew.

This gentleman hearing of the wonderful effects said to be produced by mercury, became extremely desirous to make proof of the popular belief, that this metal when reduced to a solid state, confers on its fortunate possessor the most extraordinary power, and amongst others that of travelling into the most distant regions of the globe, without other effort than that of the will to do so. The prospect of seeing neighbouring kingdoms in all their nakedness was irresistible, and the terms were so easy, and attended with so little labour, as to be quite inviting even to the phlegmatic imagination of the Pra-klang, whose fat, ponderous, and unwieldy corporation was more than enough to have excited doubts of success. A quantity of the metal was procured. The most expert magicians, alchymists, and astrologers were assembled on the occasion, but their united skill failed to produce the much desired effect. They boiled, and they roasted, and they tortured in every possible way the stubborn slippery metal, but all to no purpose. The poor Pra-klang, ashamed and disappointed, instead of flying through the air, saw himself reduced to the sad necessity of carrying his unwieldy bulk about the streets of Siam for the rest of his life.

Further proofs of the superstitious nature of this people were easily furnished. The belief in the agency of evil spirits is universal, and though

disclaimed by the religion of Buddha, they are more frequently worshipped than the latter. Nor will the darker periods of German necromancy and pretended divination be found to exceed, in point of the incredible and the horrible, what is to be observed amongst the Siamese of the present day.

It is usual to inter women that have died pregnant; the popular belief is that the necromancers have the power of performing the most extraordinary things when possessed of the infant which had been thus interred in the womb of the mother: it is customary to watch the grave of such persons, in order to prevent the infant from being carried off. The Siamese tell the tale of horror in the most solemn manner. All the hobgoblins, wild and ferocious animals, all the infernal spirits are said to oppose the unhallowed deed; the perpetrator, well charged with cabalistic terms, which he must recite in a certain fixed order, and with nerves well braced to the daring task, proceeds to the grave, which he lays open. In proportion as he advances in his work the opposing sprites become more daring; he cuts off the head, hands, and feet of the infant, with which he returns home. A body of clay is adapted to these, and this new compound is placed in a sort of temple; the matter is now

accomplished, the possessor has become master of the past, present, and future.

The funeral ceremonies observed on the death of a king are somewhat different from those mentioned above, but the principle is the same. All the people go into mourning. All ranks and both sexes shave the head, and this ceremony is repeated a third time. An immense concourse is assembled to witness the combustion of the body. The ceremony is said to constitute the most imposing spectacle which the country at any time can boast.

Within the first enclosure a line of priests are seated, reciting prayers from the sacred books, in a loud voice. Behind them the new king has taken his station. In the succeeding enclosures the princes of the royal family and other persons of distinction have taken their places. It will be seen by the manner in which the funeral-pile is lighted, how much attention has been bestowed upon the arrangement even of the most trivial matters. A train is laid from the pile to the place where the king stands, others to those occupied by the princes of the family, with this distinction in their distribution, that the train laid to the king's station is the only one that directly reaches the pile. That of the next person in rank joins this at a little distance, and so of the

others, in the order of rank. These trains are fired all at the same moment.

The outer circle of all is allotted to the performance of plays, gymnastic exercises, and feats of dexterity, and sleight of hand. The plays are divided into Siamese, Barman, Pegu, Laos, and Chinese; and they are so called more from the performers being of these several countries, than from any essential difference in the drama.

The external forms of reverence for the deceased king are impressive and unbounded; and the image formed from his ashes, being placed upon the altar, claims scarce less devotion than that of Buddha himself. That during life, while he yet grasped the sceptre, and made his subjects tremble, he should impiously assume the attributes of divinity, and claim from the unwilling mind the adoration due only to the Deity, seems even less strange, and less revolting, than this shameful, because voluntary prostitution of human intellect.

LAWS.

Where the government is perfectly despotic, it will readily be conceived that law and right are but empty names, at least, as far as regards the king, and his under-despots; that, in fact, power is law, and right, and justice. Yet where the

interests of these are not directly involved, we shall find in the system of laws a marked attention to distributive justice on the part of government. Necessity itself dictates this policy, without which no government could long exist. Under this form of administration the laws are often strictly equitable, and severely just. Yet though the laws are good, the propounders of them are in general corrupt; and where the channels of justice are tarnished, it matters little to the people that they have derived good laws from their ancestors.

ADULTERY.

The laws regarding this crime have undergone considerable changes, and seem to have kept pace with the state of civilization. Anciently, the punishment was left entirely in the hands of the injured husband, the government taking no cognizance of the affair. He could put one or both of the offending parties to death in what manner he chose. Compensation in money or goods often reconciled the parties. Subsequently, this unlimited power was taken out of the hands of the individual, and the law declared that the husband had a right to put both the offending parties to death upon the spot, but not one alone. The punishment, to be legal, must have been inflicted instantly and without

deliberation. The present laws have left no part of the punishment in the hands of individuals; the crime is punishable only by fine. The amount of the fine, though fixed, is in proportion to the rank of the criminal. Thus, a man of low rank, offending in this manner, his equal, or one of superior rank, pays two catties of silver, about two hundred Bengal rupees, or twenty-five pounds sterling. A man of rank again pays six catties.

It is reckoned a capital crime to seduce any female belonging to the palace.

THEFT—DEBT.

The laws regarding theft are in many instances particularly severe. After restoring the property or its value to the rightful owner, a fine is imposed, and the culprit is cast into prison, for a longer or shorter period, during which he is obliged not only to maintain himself, but he is made to pay for light, and even for his lodging. Of the greater number of debtors, begging is the only means of existence. They are supplied with food by the people as they pass along in chains through the bazar. Their necessities impel them to greater crimes, and they ultimately become involved in perpetual slavery. Yet the Siamese are undoubtedly a very charitable people, and appear to take delight in assisting the needy,

feeding the hungry, and helping the wretched. Nor is this virtue in them connected with ostentation. Wherever want exists, wherever distress is observed, there their aid is freely bestowed.

HISTORY.

My information on this subject is extremely scanty, and extends back but a few years.

The principal event which has occurred of late years in the history of Siam, is the capture of the old capital Yuthia, by the Barmans, under their ambitious and enterprising leader Luong Pra, whom Captain Symes calls by the name of Alompra. This took place in the year 1767. The king was at the same time taken prisoner, and by this decisive blow, the Barmans may be said to have effected the entire conquest of the country. Yet their footing was insecure. The people were rather dispirited than subdued, and their long-cherished hatred of the Barmans had undergone no change. In this state of things, a leader soon started up amongst them, who though of foreign extraction, speedily acquired influence from success.

Pe-ya-tac, the son of a wealthy China-man, by a Siamese woman, had been brought up as a menial in the palace of the king, who became attached to him as he grew up. He obtained the

government of the province called Muong-tac, where he conducted himself to the satisfaction of his master, and amassed great wealth.

The war with the Barmans was soon followed by famine. Pe-ya-tac had, on the approach of the enemy, removed with his wealth to the province of Chantibond. In this remote quarter, his generosity fed multitudes who were starving. He collected around him the dispirited inhabitants, and ventured to make head against the enemy. His first efforts were crowned with success; his followers increased in number, victory led on to victory, until he saw the enemy expelled, and himself at the head of the nation. He declared himself king, and removed the capital of the kingdom from Yuthia to Bankok. He fortified the place, and built himself a palace which is still to be seen. Every second or third year, he was involved in war with the Barmans, whom he always repulsed. He not only recovered all the former dominions of the kingdom, but added to them. Having subdued his enemies, he next turned his attention to the peaceful arts.

He readily appreciated the superior industry of his countrymen, and granted them peculiar privileges. He behaved with the greatest moderation, and is still extolled for his regard of justice.

In the latter years of his reign, his conduct

became greatly changed. The combined influence of suspicion and fanaticism rendered him an object of general dread. At the same time the most sordid avarice took possession of his mind, and led to the commission of numerous acts of cruelty. The father of the present king headed a conspiracy against him, and put him to death. The massacres which took place on this occasion were less numerous than was to have been expected from the existing state of society and public opinion.

We know but little of the character of the successor to Pe-ya-tac, but that the kingdom readily yielded to him. He died in 1782, and the present king ascended the throne at the same time.

The first public act of the present king's reign was inauspicious. He was yet scarcely seated on his throne, before he put to death his nephew, the Prince Chau-pha, with upwards of a hundred persons of rank, who were supposed to be too much attached to the latter. The pretensions of Chau-pha to the throne were, if they had any existence, but ill-supported. His popularity was the cause of his ruin. The death of so many persons of distinction, some of whom had rendered themselves famous in war against the Barmans, was displeasing to the people, and occasioned considerable discontent, which nothing but the subsequent good conduct of the king could have overcome.

The present king has been engaged in almost constant wars with the Barmans; and it is the boast of his reign that he has lost nothing in the contest. The Malay and other dependent states have made no effort to throw off the yoke. Yet the kingdom is but little indebted to the government for the tranquillity which it has enjoyed. Nothing can be conceived more weak, or more contemptible, than the measures instituted for its defence.

It would seem as if it feared its own subjects as its greatest enemies; as if it dreaded domestic sedition, more than an attack from abroad. The country lies open in every quarter, without even a shew of defence. Thus it must ever be with governments founded on despotism. All confidence must be destroyed, where the interests of the people are trampled upon.

REVENUE.

The land-tax is paid chiefly in kind. Besides this, a considerable revenue is derived from the privilege of fishing in rivers, and of distilling arrack. Other taxes are levied in a more odious and oppressive manner, as in the case of commercial and other monopolies. The principal of these are monopolies of sugar, pepper, benzoin, agila wood, and, in short, of all valuable commo-

dities. They are delivered to the king at a fixed price.

Arrack is consumed almost exclusively by the Chinese, and the manufacture of it is entirely in their hands.

The privilege of distilling arrack at Bankok, is let for eighteen peculs of silver = 72,000 ticals *,

At Yuthia, for	6 peculs
Sohai	1 do.
Ta Saim	1 do.
Rahain	1 do.
Camphen	1 do.
Cha-nāāt	0 20 catties
Korāāt	2
Ban-chang	3
Kan-būri	0 20 catties
Chan-pon	0 30 do.
Pat-thee	0 20 do.
Çhia	0 8 do.
To-long	0 30 do.

Fruit trees, &c., are taxed as follows :—

1 Mangoe tree	1 fuang †.
Mangosteen	1 do.
Durian	1 tical each tree.
Cocoa-nut	1 fuang for eight trees.
Areca nut	1 do. for 100 trees.
Piper betel	1 do. do.
Tobacco	2 fuangs for 100 plants.
Sugar cane	2 do. per bed.

* The tical is about twenty-five per cent. more valuable than the Sicca rupee.

† A fuang is the eighth part of a tical.

No other fruits pay duty.

The revenue derived from fruit trees alone, is said to amount to 7000 catties of silver.

That derived from the gambling houses is said to equal that from arrack.

The privilege of fishing in rivers is said to be let for eight peculs.

NUMERALS.

The notation of the Siamese seems to be exactly similar in principle to our own, and is evidently derived from the mode used in Sanskrit, from some ancient form of which the notation of Arabia and the west has branched off.

1 Nung.	11 Ṡee-bayt.	21 Y-see-boyt.
2 Sŏng.	12 Seep-sŏng.	30 Sāăm-sēĕp.
3 Sāăm.	13 Seep-sāăm.	40 See-seep.
4 Sēĕ.	14 Seep-see.	50 Hāā-seep.
5 Hāā.	15 Seep-hāā.	60 Hoc-seep.
6 Hŏc.	16 Seep-hŏc.	70 Chayt-seep.
7 Chāyt.	17 Seep-chayt.	80 Payt-seep.
8 Pāyt.	18 Seep-payt.	90 Kao-seep.
9 Kao.	19 Seep-kao.	100 Roy
10 Seep.	20 Y-seep.	

DAYS OF THE WEEK.

Days.	Siamese name.	Signification of Siamese name.	
Sunday	Van-a-thed	Day of the sun.	
Monday	Van-chan	do.	moon.
Tuesday	Van-ang-khān	do.	star ang-khan.
Wednesday	Van-phoodh	do.	do. phoodh.

Days.	Siamese name.	Signification of Siamese name.
Thursday	Van-pra-hadh	Day of the star pra-hadh.
Friday	Van-sookh	do. sookh
Saturday	Van-sao	do. sao.

NAMES OF THE MONTHS.

Months.	Siamese name.	Literally.
January	Duan-aij.	1st. month.
February	Duan-jee.	2d. do.
March	Duan-sāām.	3d. do.
April	Duan-see.	&c. &c.
May	Duan-hāa.	
June	Duan-hōk.	
July	Duan-ched.	
August	Duan-ped.	
September	Duan-kao.	
October	Duan-seep.	
November	Duan-seebet.	
December	Duan-seep-song.	

The Siamese year commences with the first moon in December. At the close of the year there is a grand festival, called the feast of the souls of the dead. At this period also the Siamese propitiate the elements; the fire, the air, the earth, and water. Water is the favourite element. Rivers claim the greatest share in this festival. Rice and fruits are thrown into the stream; a thousand fantastic toys are set afloat on the water; thousands of floating lamps cast a flickering light upon the scene, and the approach of evening is hailed as the season of innocent amusement, as well as of religious duty.

The Siamese affect to bestow great attention upon the construction of their calendar. There is little difference between it and that of the Chinese; and it is very doubtful if they could construct one without the assistance of the latter, which they procure regularly from Pekin. Formerly a Brahman was entertained at court for the purpose of regulating the calendar. That office is now executed by a native of the country, by name Pra-hora.

The Siamese years are divided as below into duodecennial periods, thus:

Years.	Siamese name.	In English meaning
1st.	Chouat	Rat's year.
2d.	Cha-lou	Cows' do.
3d.	Khăn	Tiger's do.
4th.	Thō	Hare's do.
5th.	Maron	Dragon's do.
6th.	Maseng	Snakes' do.
7th.	Mă-mia	Horses' do.
8th.	Ma-may	Goats' do.
9th.	Vock	Monkey's do.
10th.	Ray-ka	Fowls' do.
11th.	Chō	Dog's do.
12th.	Khun	Pig's do.

RELIGION.

Our inquiries respecting the origin of the Baudhic religion amongst the Siamese have been attended with but little success; nor do they leave us much ground to hope that any docu-

ments or writings they possess are calculated to throw any certain or steady light upon this interesting, but very obscure, subject.

The general persuasion amongst the priests, however, is, that it had its origin in the country called Lanka*, which they acknowledge to be Ceylon, for which island they still entertain the highest reverence, and imagine that there the doctrines of their faith are contained in their greatest purity. Others maintain that it had its origin in the country called Kabillah Path, the common name amongst the Siamese for Europe; while others again assert it to be of domestic origin, and taught by a man sent from God.

The person who taught them this religion is known under various names, as,

Ong-Sam-ma, Sam Puttho, which is said to mean Omnipotens.

Sommonokodam, i. e., one who steals cattle. Phut, and Phuti. (Pati, a lord ?)

Prā-phut, the high Lord.

Pra-phuti-roop, i. e., the image of the high Lord.

Before he was considered sacred, his name was Prā-si Thāāt.

He is said to have been born of a father called Soori-soothoght, and of a mother called Pra-Soori-maha-maya.

* The Barmans entertain the highest reverence for Magadha; a deputation from his Majesty of Ava visited the sacred places in that vicinity a few years ago. Possibly this veneration for localities changes according to political circumstances.

Other names of Buddha:—

Y-thee-pee-so. Pā-kā-wā. Ora-hang.

They state that 2340 years have elapsed since the religion was first introduced; a date which is said to be stated in their sacred books, and particularly in that called Pra-sak-ka-rah, which was written by Buddha himself, or at least under his direction.

He commenced the task of converting men, by teaching them a more civilized mode of life, directing them to avoid rapine and plunder; to cultivate the soil and to lay aside their ferocious manners, and to live in peace with each other, and with all other animals of the creation.

His commands were, at first, but five; they were afterwards increased to eight. The five first alone are essential to the salvation of man, and he who observes them will assuredly merit heaven. These five are more particularly calculated for the lower orders; but it is very meritorious to observe the other three.

Commands of Buddha:—

1. * Panna Thi-bāt, ham-mi kha Satt.

You shall not kill an animal or living creature of any kind.

* According to Loubere, this enactment suffers various interpretations, some abstaining from feeding on vegetables so as to hurt the seed, and so, says he, eat only fruit; others vary the practice of the law in the opposite direction, and hang themselves out of devotion, which action, if performed on a certain sacred tree, is considered as having great merit.

2. Ad thi ma than, ham-mi hai lac sab.

You shall not steal any thing.

3. Kham-mi sumi cha-chān, ham-mi hai somg sel năi phi ri yan than puun.

You shall not have intercourse with the wives of other men.

4. Moo-sa va tha, ham mi hai phŭt kohoc sab plab.

You shall not speak an untruth or any falsehood on any occasion.

5. Sura me rai, hai mi hai dūūm kin sung nam maou.

You shall not drink any intoxicating liquor, or any substance calculated to intoxicate.

6. Ka me sumitsa cham, ham-mi hai non kab mia.

During the increase of the moon, you shall not, on the 8th, or on the 15th, have connexion with woman.

N.B. These two days are called von-prā, i. e., Dies Domini, the days of the Pra.

7. Vi ka la po chana, ham-mi hai kin khong nōek vela.

You shall not eat after mid-day.

8. Oocha se jana, ham mi hai nōn nūa thiang an vi chit ang gnam.

It is not becoming to sleep on costly, soft, rich, and elevated beds. You shall sleep on a clean mat.

There are, as has been already observed, set days, on which it is proper to worship at the temples, as on the 8th and 15th of the moon. There are also other days that are held sacred, and they are pointed out as such by persons who profess to be acquainted with judicial astrology. This sort of divination, however, is not cultivated by the priests, who affect to consider it as profane and improper. Yet when the astrologers

have pointed out particular days as proper for devotion, or as being lucky or the contrary, the priests observe them.

It is customary for every Siamese to enter the rank of priests in the course of his life. He may remain in it or leave it at pleasure.

PROVINCE OF CHANTIBOONA, OR CHANTIBOND.

The reverses of fortune which this province has undergone, within a comparatively short period, have been remarkable. It for a long time belonged to the ancient kingdom of Cambodia, but on the partition of that admired and beautiful, but unfortunate country, was seized upon by the Cochin-Chinese. It has since passed into the hands of the king of Siam, and has constituted an integral part of his dominions since the reign of the Chinese king.

Chantibond is a mountainous country, forming the eastern boundary of the kingdom of Siam, dividing it from Cambodia, and situated at the head of the Gulf of Siam. It is said to be one of the richest and most valuable provinces of the king of Siam. It is singularly beautiful and picturesque, diversified by lofty mountains,

extensive forests, and fertile vallies and plains. The passage thence to Cambodia is of short distance, a ridge of mountains dividing the two countries. It possesses a good and convenient harbour, well protected by numerous beautiful islands in front. The river is obstructed in a great measure at its mouth, but affords convenient and safe navigation to small vessels and boats. It once possessed an extensive and profitable commerce, which has been upon the decline since the place fell into the hands of the Siamese. The produce of the country is annually removed to Bankok, and the commerce with foreign ships is prohibited.

The principal productions are pepper, the cultivation of which may be increased almost to an unlimited extent, benzoin, lac, ivory, agila wood, rhinoceros' horns, hides of cows, buffaloes, deer, &c., gamboge, some cardamoms, and precious stones, the latter of inferior quality. The forests abound in excellent timber, and afford the best materials for ship-building: accordingly, many junks are built at this place. Many of the islands in front of the port, and particularly that called Bangga-cha, produce abundance of precious stones. The island Sa-ma-ra-yat, to the east of the harbour, is said to produce gold. In the former of these islands, there is a safe and convenient harbour.

At a short distance from the coast, there is a very high mountain, called Bomba-soi, commanding an extensive view both of Chantibond and of Cambodia.

The amount of population is uncertain, some stating that it amounts to nearly one million, while others reckon it under half that number. It is composed of Chinese, Cochin Chinese, Cambodians, and Siamese; but by far the greater number are Chinese, in whose hands are all the wealth, and the richest products of the country. There are also from two to three hundred native Christians in the place, who, like those in other parts of Siam, are placed under the care of the bishop of Metellopolis, Joseph Florens, a Frenchman.

The place is governed by a man of Chinese extraction, appointed by the king of Siam.

Of pepper, the principal object of culture, the annual produce, at the present time, is said to amount to 20,000 peculs. It is sold to the king on the spot, for eight ticals a pecul. The price in Bankok is eighteen.

The cardamoms produced in Chantibond are reckoned of inferior quality. Those of Cambodia are reckoned the best. They are purchased on the spot by the king, for 120 or 140 ticals, and re-sold at Bankok for 270, 280, and

even 300. They are carried exclusively to China, where they are held in high esteem.

The agila wood of Chantibond is reckoned among the best, and is only equalled by that of Cochin China.

The consumption of this highly odoriferous substance is very considerable even in Siam, but the greatest part is exported to China. Its use is of the highest antiquity, and it has in general been allotted chiefly for sacred purposes, for the service of the temple, and the solemn ceremonies of funeral rites. Much of it is consumed in the combustion of bodies of persons of distinction. The Chinese would appear to use it chiefly in their temples, both public and private, and as every Chinese house is furnished with a small temple for the reception of their household gods, the consumption of this wood by them must be very extensive. It is used in a very economical and neat mode. A quantity of the wood is first reduced to a fine powder, which, being mixed with a gummy substance, is laid over a small slip of soft wood, about the size of a bull-rush, so as to form a tolerably thick coating. These small sticks are stuck on end in the temple, and being lighted, give out a feeble but grateful perfume, the substance burning with a slow and smothered flame. This sort

of taper is made up into bundles, wrapt up in fine paper, and sold in almost every shop.

The odoriferous principle in agila wood resides in a black, thick, concrete oil, resembling tar or resin while burning *. It is disposed in numerous cells, and gives to the wood a blackish, dotted appearance. It is generally asserted that this is the effect of a disease in the tree; but the opinion may well be called in question. It would rather seem to be the natural effect of a necessary modification of the living principle of the plant itself, no more partaking of the nature of disease than an inevitable and destined change and termination of life can be said to constitute such a state.

The odoriferous part is found in comparatively few trees, and those chiefly where the trees have either died, or have been possessed of feeble remains of vitality. The perfect trees, those bearing leaves, or fruit in perfection, rarely possess any part of it: neither does it appear to depend much upon the size of the tree, small ones often affording it in large quantity, while large ones yield very little or none at all. Is it not probable that it proceeds from an effort of nature to support the feeble remains of vegetable life? In this case, the juices of the plant, like

* It is, perhaps, a combination of an essential oil with resin.

the blood of animals, retreat towards the centre, where they still, for a time, maintain the feeble spark. The oil, in the case of this plant, is secreted in larger quantity; and accumulating in the thicker and central parts of the tree, and towards the root, forms the substance in question.

The Siamese name this substance—Nuga-mai, also, Mâi-hoâm. For a botanical description of the tree, see Loureiro, page 327. Roxburgh has also described this tree under the title Aguillaria Agallocha. Loureiro states, that a particular, and that the most valuable variety of this wood, is called Colambac, or Calampac. This last is represented by the Siamese as the produce of a tree totally different.

The cause which has been assigned above for the scantiness of my information on matters of general interest, will apply with still greater force to the subject of natural history. Ill health, and the restrictions under which we were placed by the government, have rendered this subject almost a complete blank; a circumstance the more to be regretted, for that we had reason to expect an ample accession to our knowledge in this quarter. The few facts which I have been enabled to collect, I shall now briefly relate.

In speaking of the peninsula of Malacca, I have

said, that its unfrequented forests seemed to contain zoological treasures yet unknown to us. A similar remark is no less applicable to the kingdom of Siam generally. There seems every reason to believe that an extensive search would be attended with the happiest results to the science of natural history. Restricted as we were from researches of this nature, we have discovered animals in the classes Mammalia, Aves, and Reptilia, which are either imperfectly, or altogether unknown to the European world.

Of that uncommon variety of the elephant, the white or Albino, a description has already been given. This, however, cannot be considered other than a variety of the common elephant of the country, which does not appear to differ in any considerable degree from that of Hindostan and Ceylon. All the elephants here were less in size than the Ceylon elephant; their tusks were also shorter, and less curved; although in one or two of those we saw, a greater degree of symmetry was noticed than is common in this animal.

At Bankok, the elephant is hardly available to any useful purpose, few roads existing on which he can walk. They are kept about the palace, and used only on state occasions. The king is said to have a great number in his possession. They are employed as beasts of

burden with the troops in the interior of the country.

A description has also been given above, of a species of white Simia. This, likewise, is a genuine Albino. I was informed by several persons, that about two years ago, the king had in his possession an Albino of the deer kind. Albinos among buffaloes are in this country very common, often indeed the most frequent and only variety of that animal, and generally exceeding in bulk the common or original black one. It is of frequent occurrence in the Malay Islands, and in all agricultural countries, from Penang as far east as Java.

This prevalence of the leucæthiopic habit among so many of the more perfect and larger animals of the Class Mammalia is deserving of remark. How far the habit is developed by peculiarity of climate, it is difficult to determine; the geographical limits, however, within which this variety of animal occurs, with unwonted frequency, are not very extensive.

It is, perhaps, but little connected with this subject to state, that on the coasts of Siam we saw, on two occasions, a species of Porpoise of a white colour, with a slight cast of pink. Viewing these animals from a distance, it is of course impossible to say whether they were of the leucæthiopic habit or not. The fact that this dis-

tinction has not hitherto been observed in any animal with cold blood, would seem unfavourable to the first supposition.

The Royal Tiger is extremely common in the interior parts of the country. Their bones, as well as skins, constitute a considerable article of commerce with China; and, from the very great numbers in which they are exposed for sale, we may infer their frequency. The bones are said to be used as medicine by the Chinese, and a quantity of them may be seen suspended in every medicine-shop. The Black Tiger is by no means rare. Both this and the former, I consider smaller than the Bengal Tiger.

Leopards would also appear to be common. Many of the handsomest skins are exposed in the shops on the river. Of this animal I have observed no variety. No Jackalls, Hares, or Rabbits were seen.

CHAPTER VII.

Depart from Siam.—Sechang, or Dutch Islands.—Inhabitants.—Enormous Yam.—Bay of Siam.—Geological Remarks.—Pulo Panjang.—Two Brothers Islands.—Pulo Condore.—Geology.—Inhabitants.—Hospitable Character.—Cape St. James Current.—Bay of Cocoa Nuts.—Geology, &c.—Vung Tao.—Costume.—Governor of Kan-dyn, a Singular Character, takes charge of an Official Communication to the Governor of Saigon.—Inhabitants very polite.—Dress almost exclusively in Silk.—Physiognomy and Form.—Habitations.—Costume.—Shops.—Royal Boats.

Our residence at Bankok was not of a nature to excite regret on leaving it. The mean, suspicious, and weak conduct of the Government, selfish in all its measures, regardless of the welfare of its subjects, was more calculated to excite feelings of contempt than of respect. The restrictions under which they had placed the members of the mission were certainly unnecessary, and are an additional proof of the weakness, as well as of the ignorance of the Government. All attempts to visit the interior of the country were unavailing. It has already been stated that the Government of Siam is altogether despotic, and circumstances have been

related which will throw some light upon the state of manners under this condition of government. I may here briefly remark, before taking final leave of the Siamese, that the manners of the highest ranks are far from engaging. We should here look in vain for that courtly ease, and that polished exterior, so common to almost all Asiatics of high rank. An offensive coarseness, a manifest disregard to the feelings of others, and arrogance unbounded, have usurped its place.

Bad government has not been able to produce effects so baneful on the manners of the lower orders of the people. If we except low cunning and falsehood, twin crimes, bred under the wing of despotism, we shall find, in the manners of the latter, more that is deserving of praise than of blame. They are kind and charitable towards each other, peaceable and quiet subjects, and remarkable for fidelity and honesty in their transactions. Towards strangers they are affable, and extremely kind, polite, and attentive: they at once inspire them with confidence; they are communicative and obliging. They have, on all occasions, appeared to us the more amiable part of the people, and with a very few exceptions, they were the only class that either shewed us attention, or from whom we could gain any

information. From this class I do not separate the priesthood, in general very attentive to strangers.

On our leaving the capital, the Court did not confer the least mark of attention on the mission, not even so far as to learn the period of our departure. Presents for the Governor General, consisting of Elephants' Teeth, Agila Wood, Benzoin, Cardamoms, Pepper, Sugar, and Tin, had been previously delivered. The Chief, Suri-Wong, asked Mr. Crawfurd to visit him on the day of our embarkation, and on the following night, Chroma-chit made a similar request.

Our departure from Bankok had taken place earlier than we had contemplated, for it had been long maintained by Captain M'Donnel, that the ship could not get over the bar of the river before the month of September. A difference of opinion had now occurred amongst the navigators, and it was determined that the trial should be made, after lightening the ship as much as was consistent with safety. The resolution was gratifying to all of us.

We embarked in the evening of the 14th of July, and on the 16th we began to drop slowly down the river. On the 18th, we passed * Pack-

* Packnam is a term of frequent occurrence in Siam, apparently signifying the mouth of a river.

nam, and on the 24th, we crossed the bar. The S. W. monsoon blows right in upon the river, and there is consequently great labour and difficulty in warping a ship over a mud-bank upwards of ten miles in extent.

On the 2d of August we moved over to some islands in front of the river, called Sechang, or Dutch Islands, for the purpose of completing our quantity of water, taking in ballast, and fitting the ship for sea, the rigging having been all taken down while she lay at Bankok.

On the 4th of August, we anchored in a fine deep bay, formed by the islands just mentioned.

We availed ourselves of the necessary delay of the vessel at this place, to make daily excursions to the surrounding islands.

The name Sechang is properly applicable only to the principal island of the group; the next in point of size, about a mile distant to the W., is called Ko-kan. The other islands are of trifling extent; some of them, like the large ones, are covered with rather stunted wood, and others are merely bare rocks, appearing above water. The two larger islands bear marks of a considerable extent of former cultivation, and on both, a few miserable looking inhabitants are still to be found. The quantity of level ground is too scanty to maintain a population of any extent, and the few persons we found here, had been

compelled by the King of Siam to live on the spot. It is difficult to conceive any other motive for this species of banishment, than political ambition; for such islands must be totally unproductive to the government. It should at the same time be acknowledged, that nothing is expended in their occupation, Though by their own account compelled to adopt this residence, the few people whom we found here, in appearance, at least, abundantly miserable, seemed to attach no particular hardship to their lot.

Upon a small sandy beach, at the northern extremity of Ko-kan, are twelve small huts, with two apartments in each, constructed of palm-leaves, which the occupiers must have carried with them from the inhabited parts of the continent. Of these huts, some were now empty, but a part of the population, consisting of two or three old women, as many old men, and a considerable number of sickly children, came out to meet us on our landing. Premature old age had seized upon those that had grown up, whether from the scantiness of their food, its inferior quality, or uncertain supply, or from cares inseparable from this rude condition of society, is perhaps doubtful. Their shrivelled limbs, their wrinkled and contracted features, their half-famished forms, their scanty dress, bespoke a people supremely wretched; yet their wants were but

few, nor did they importune us for the gratification of them. The men that were present were reserved, if not sullen, and viewed us with little interest, or perhaps with suspicion. The women, on the contrary, were evidently pleased at our approach, and gave every demonstration that our visit was welcome to them. Here, where we might have expected selfishness in the most exclusive degree, we were delighted to witness nothing but the most disinterested kindness. A plantain, a yam, and a few pepper-corns, reared by their own hands, were, in their eyes, commodities of the highest value,—yet these, though they had but a scanty supply of them, were instantly produced, and we were eagerly solicited to take them with us. They neither asked for, nor expected any thing in return, and they seemed surprised, as well as delighted, when on a subsequent visit Mr. Crawfurd made them presents of cloth.

Fish forms the principal article of their food, and the surrounding seas afford an abundant supply; but such is the poverty, or want of energy or ingenuity in these poor creatures, that they are often very ill-supplied from this quarter.

These poor people had laid at our feet all that was valuable in their eyes. They gained confidence during our visit, and all of them became more familiar. Mrs. Crawfurd had accompanied

us to the village, and her presence conferred a degree of interest upon the scene not easy to be described. The men, stupid with wonder, seemed to look upon her as a being of another creation; and indeed, if we cast our eyes upon the contrast in the female forms now before us, their wonder will not appear surprising, and these rude and wretched savages might well doubt that they had but little connexion with our race. Never, perhaps, was savage life more strikingly contrasted with refined; an accomplished female, brought up in all the elegance and refinement of the first metropolis in the world, stood opposed to the rude, scarce human forms of the savage islanders of the Gulf of Siam!

With more confidence, but with no less surprise and wonder, the women and children seemed anxious to approach a form which was eminently pleasing to them, but were withheld by a sort of awe. Such a scene were worthy of the painter's skill.

We now ascended a neighbouring hill, on which were cultivated the Dioscorea alata, Convolvulus Batatus, Zea Mays, and Capsicum. The energy of vegetation in the Dioscorea seemed to have been too great for the moderate share of industry exerted by the natives in their rude agriculture. This luxuriant plant had spread over all the cleared ground, choking every plant near it, and

obstructing even its own growth by the over-abundant production of stem. We have observed this tendency in the same plant, on the opposite island. Yet it is not to be found in the forest, nor of indigenous growth. I have never seen it but in spots that have once been cultivated, nor have I observed solitary plants of it. Other species of this genus are common in the forest, and are in general solitary.

It is deserving of remark in this place, that we found on the various islands which form this bay, and particularly upon the lesser ones, a considerable number of plants, whose economy bears a striking analogy to that of Dioscorea; like that useful plant, too, they belong to the natural order Asparagi, of Jussieu. They are all creeping plants, elegant in their form, producing abundance of fine foliage, ascending to the tops of the tallest trees, often covering them, as it were, with a mantle. The most extraordinary of these is a plant bearing affinity both to Dioscorea and to Menispermum, but differing from both in some essential generic characters. The great beauty of the creeping stem, suspended in elegant festoons from the branches of the surrounding trees, were sufficient to attract attention. But the most singular property of this herbaceous plant is the disposition which it has of forming tuberous roots of a most extra-

ordinary size, a circumstance the more singular, because, independent of the small size of its stem, scarcely larger than a quill, it is found growing in the most arid and steril situations, without a particle of earth to conceal its roots; neither are its leaves succulent, nor its stem nor root of a texture apparently fitted to convey a large proportion of vegetable juice, both being rather hard and fibrous. The singular tuberosity of this plant is formed at the exit of the root from the rock or surrounding stones, and is, in general, buried about one-fourth under the surface. The part exposed is globular, of a dirty-white colour, warty, and internally the yam is tough and fibrous rather than spongy. One brought on board, on account of its size, weighed 474 lb., and measured 9½ feet in circumference; others, of still greater size, were not uncommon. It will be conceived, that such vast masses of vegetable matter are but little adapted to become the food of man; it is, however, not altogether neglected for that use, though but rarely had recourse to. For this purpose, the farinaceous matter is separated from the juice, vegetable fibre, and other products, by drying, maceration, *&c.* The root is also used in medicine.

Of all the tuberous roots this would appear to be by far the largest and most extraordinary. In other plants of the kind, the tuberosities are

proportionate to the size of the plants, and their visible means of nourishment. In this, the yam is of the most gigantic size, and its stem extremely small. The means of nourishment are by no means apparent. Earth and water, the ordinary sources of vegetable nutriment, are almost altogether wanting; the stem is not of a structure to require any thing but simple support from the surrounding trees. There remains no visible source but the atmosphere, to which its numerous leaves are amply exposed, through the aid of the surrounding trees.

To the botanist these islands afford a most interesting field; and, notwithstanding the numerous visits which we have made to them, much still remains to be done. We never returned from them without considerable numbers of plants that were new to us, amongst which there are some undescribed in our systematic catalogues.

The islands abound in plants of that beautiful natural order Apocyneæ; we found several most elegant species of Hoya amongst them. The plants of the order Euphorbiæ are still more numerous. Ficus, several tall species.

Of the Caprifolia there is a considerable number; but it is remarkable that Rhizophora is not amongst them, neither are there any plants

of similar habits. The absence of alluvial soil upon the sea-coast is probably the cause.

We were somewhat surprised to find that there were no palms. We had found them on similar islands not far distant.

The Aroideæ are numerous; several of the plants very handsome, exceeding the usual size of plants of that genus.

The arborescent form of vegetation prevails, but attains no considerable height.

On the larger islands the tamarind-tree occurs frequently, and in situations which might lead us to conclude it to be of indigenous origin. For the most part, however, it is found in places that were formerly cultivated, where they have in all probability been planted. The tree is of inconsiderable size, and produces but little fruit.

For a further account of the rich vegetable products of these islands, I must refer to the botanical catalogue.

The zoology of these islands is scarce less interesting, though more limited, than its vegetation. Of the class Mammalia, the number of species is extremely scanty. A species of rat, and a white squirrel, were the only members of this class that occurred to us. The latter is rare, about eight inches in length; an active, lively, and handsome animal.

A species of white porpoise is common in the seas about these islands. It is of a clear white colour, with a very slight tinge of pink. I estimated its length to be about eight or nine feet.

Of birds we procured a fine species of black Pelican, a blue-coloured Heron, several specimens of Columba litoralis, and a variety of the same bird of a bluish cast; another handsome species of Columba, of an iron-brown colour, a green-coloured species of the same bird; a species of Falco of a white colour, and a few others, together with some curious fish, of which, as well as of the former, figures have been taken. Amongst the more curious objects, will be found a very beautiful species of Lacerta, and several large species of Cancer, found by the people at the watering-place. Descriptions of these will be found in the catalogues.

In the examination of the rocky shores and bare cliffs of Sechang, the geological student will find an ample field for speculation. We have visited few islands whose structure has interested us more.

For an account of the mineral masses, see the Catalogue, and the accompanying specimens. I shall here attempt, what these, in their insulated state, are not well calculated to convey, some information respecting their relative position, &c.

At various distant points on several of the

islands, are to be seen, chiefly at the time of low water, extensive masses of a coarse-grained granite, abounding in plates of gray and black mica, and possessing a considerable degree of slaty structure, the mica being disposed chiefly in parallel laminæ. There is reason to suppose that this rock constitutes the base of the islands, as well as of the bay formed by them. On its horizontal surface, it terminates abruptly, without ascending into elevated or peaked masses, having a rough, horizontal surface, rarely rising above high-water mark. It is not to be seen at any distance from the sea-shore, being there concealed by the superincumbent rocks.

On this horizontal surface of the granite are placed two principal superincumbent rocks, quartz-rock, and granular limestone. These seem to rest alike upon the granite of their base, their relative position being lateral with regard to each other. They are much intermixed, and often alternate with each other. The quartz-rock rises into the highest peaks; the limestone often laps over it, so as to appear to have it for its base.

The quartz-rock varies in appearance. The grey and the white are the principal varieties; in both there is a considerable proportion of calcareous matter, and they effervesce briskly. Some parts are compact, with a fracture nearly

conchoidal; such are often traversed by small seams of pure white quartz. Other parts are distinctly slaty, and here the strata are displaced, contorted, and curved; such parts are soft; penetrated by caves of considerable extent.

Masses of pure quartz abound in some parts of this rock.

The granular limestone is also of various appearance. It is intermixed with small veniform portions of dolomite, finely crystallized. Both the dolomite and granular varieties are completely soluble in sulphuric acid.

On the smaller islands, the quartz-rock is intersected by retiform veins of iron ore.

Both are stratified rocks; direction of the strata from east to west, dipping to the north.

On the morning of the 13th we landed on the principal island, in pursuit of white squirrels. Mr. Crawfurd following a narrow path-way in the jungle, pursued it to the distance of nearly a mile, when it suddenly opened upon a small plain, neatly cultivated with Indian corn, chillies, yams, and sweet potatoes. It was on all sides surrounded by hills and thick woods, and had an appearance of neatness, comfort, and simplicity, calculated to convey an exaggerated, if not erroneous, notion of its actual state. The cultivated part might extend to eight or ten acres, a space too extensive for the labours of the feeble hands

of its actual occupants, who had been simply left in charge of the rude plantation. These were a very old man and woman, the former a Chinaman, the latter a native of Laos. They were both nearly blind. The man, on whom we had stolen unobserved, paid at first but little regard to his visitors. The old woman welcomed us with clamorous expressions of hospitality. She lamented that she had nothing to offer us but some plantains and Indian corn. Their hut, though small, was clean and neat. The transition from civilized life to this rude spot appeared to have occasioned no regrets on the part of either. However miserable the condition of rude life, man easily yields to it. No pair could live in more rude simplicity than this. A few vegetables and the pure stream were their only viands; the face of unrestrained nature seemed to smile upon them; yet it was but a fallacious smile; whatever was necessary for their comfort sprung from the labour of their own hands. Their wants were but few and easily satisfied. They felt the effects neither of luxurious habits, nor of capricious appetites. They were exempt from many of the miseries that accompany a more civilized state. Age alone had laid his hand upon them, and they were gradually sinking into the grave. Deafness was added to the loss of sight; yet they complained only of the

loss of the latter. They had naught to complain of but the loss of that sweetest of our senses; that which adds delight to all the rest.

The soil was here abundant, and apparently good, consisting of vegetable mould in considerable proportion, intermixed with lime and quartz. It was much too good to have been formed from the detritus of quartz-rock. I may express a doubt whether the rock which we have called by that name is fairly entitled to it.

In other parts, and particularly on the smaller islands, the soil, on the contrary, is evidently of the nature of that formed from such a rock,—steril, dry, earthless, stony.

Several streams of excellent water will be found on various parts of this island, and a very fine one on the east side, to which a foot-path leads from a fine sandy beach. On the sloping sides of the hill at this place, is built a small Pra-cha-di or Dagoba.

The junks usually take shelter under a projecting point, which terminates the sandy beach. The place is also convenient as affording excellent water. Though it answers their purpose, it will not that of European ships. Our men found out a convenient watering-place, about a mile beyond, on the same side of the island, towards the north.

Notwithstanding the apparent natural luxuriance of these islands, they will be found, with regard to man, to be rather steril. The proportion of level ground is besides very inconsiderable, and the hills are too steep to admit of easy or profitable culture. It is not therefore likely that they will ever become settlements of any extent on their own account.

As a depôt favourable to commercial enterprise, much might be said in favour of their occupation. The bay is spacious and safe at all times, the entrance wide, the anchorage good, the defence of the place would not be difficult. It seems probable that the trade of Siam and of Cochin China might be brought to centre here. It lies quite contiguous to the countries which produce pepper, cardamoms, agila wood, Benzoin, &c., articles of great demand in China.

The principal island lies in lat. 13° 12′ N., and long. 155° E.

August 14*th*.—The ship being now completed for sea, weighed anchor, and stood over, with a fair light wind, for the west side of the gulf. On the following morning both sides of the bay were in sight. We were within twelve or fifteen miles' distance of the west coast. Its appearance is singularly picturesque, yet greatly dissimilar from that of the opposite side. The most marked

difference consists in the absence of islands on this, while on the opposite they are innumerable.

An extensive low ground, covered with thick woods, stretches along the sea-coast. We could here see abundance of palms growing; the Palmyra appeared to be the most common. Appearances would lead us to infer this low ground to be well inhabited. The lofty mountains in the back-ground render this country singularly picturesque. Sam-rayot, signifying three hundred peaks, the name by which the Siamese designate this tract, is expressive of its appearance. The mountain ranges run in the direction of north and south. They are very elevated, extremely rugged on their flanks, as well as summits, projecting into innumerable bold conical peaks. It is perhaps a singular circumstance, considering that the direction of these mountain ranges is from north to south, that they are steepest towards the east, while, of mountains so distributed, it has been observed, that the steepest acclivities lie towards the west.

Another singular circumstance in the appearance of these mountains, is that of the insulated situation of some of the loftiest peaks, or rather mountains. Three of the latter are perfectly conical, lofty, and very steep, and their position is perfectly insular, miles intervening between

them and the mountain ranges from which they stand detached. They are situated upon the flat, apparently alluvial, ground already mentioned.

The greater hardness of the granitic mass in these will hardly account for this circumstance.

16*th*.—Continued our course along the west side of the gulf, until we had nearly gained Point Kui. From this part of the coast we could descry the islands off Cape Liant on the opposite side of the gulf. The mountain ranges which were first visible when we were opposite to Sam-ra-yot, stretch southward as far as the eye can trace them, without apparent deviation of form or altitude.

On the 17th, we stood over to the opposite coast. We had now the regular monsoon from the south-west. The wind steady, and the sea moderate, but the weather almost constantly cloudy and damp. A small species of swallow abounds in this part of the bay. Several of them alighted on the ship, and suffered themselves to be taken.

On the morning of the 19th, Pulo Panjang, an island about three miles long, surrounded by several lesser ones, situated a little way within the entrance of the gulf, and distant from the land on both sides, came in sight. The situation might be considered singular. It has been rarely visited by Europeans, and the accounts

we have of it, as well as of its geographical position, are very imperfect. On viewing scenes unfrequented by man, the imagination is but too apt to disappoint the sober expectations of experience. From the familiar and the common, it leaps at once into the extravagant, captivated with the visionary fabric of its own creation.

The imperfection of our knowledge, independent of the peculiar situation of P. Panjang, in an extensive gulf, little subject to the influence of storms, had awakened expectation, which the magnitude of the island, the tabular form of its central range of hills, and the appearance of bold, precipitous rocks, were calculated to augment on a more close inspection.

But nature does not always appear under new forms when we most expect them. At four p. m. we cast anchor on the north side of the island, about its middle, and immediately landed. An aspect more steril than ordinary seemed to forbid our approach. The shores were rocky and precipitous, and though there was but little swell in the sea, we found some difficulty in reaching the shore. From the centre of the island to the sea-shore, the land was abrupt and steep, there being not the smallest extent of level ground. It is everywhere covered with vegetation, of which a great part of that nearest the beach and exposed to the direct influence of

the monsoon, is stunted, herbaceous, and disposed in what may be called laid plains or ledges, as if the herbage had received the impression of pernicious blasts.

The coast of this island is everywhere surrounded by large fragmented masses of sandstone, in which there is, on the whole, but little variety of appearance. In situ, it is disposed in large, nearly horizontal, tabular masses, at a distance wearing somewhat of a slaty appearance. The sand-stone is for the most part red, at other times white or gray. It is coarse-grained and gritty, presenting no vestige of organic remains; here and there it is coloured with iron. The cement in most parts seems to be calcareous. Here and there, large masses of conglomerate are found; the masses that I have seen were all detached, but in some parts the surface of the sand-stone shewed where they had adhered; the structure of this was complex; iron seemed to form the cement; rounded pebbles of quartz, sand-stone, iron ore and jasper, with small bits of clay-slate, form the aggregate. Scattered over the beach, there were found masses of coarse jasper.

Such were the principal, and almost the only mineral masses exposed to our view, and of which, we have every reason to believe, the whole of the island is composed.

It is not to be expected that such an island as this would afford many zoological specimens. Of the Mammalia, we saw two animals; a handsome species of gray-coloured Sciurus, which we had the good fortune to procure, and a small species of Vespertilio, which fluttered about amongst the thickest shades of the forest.

Of the Aves, we saw several of that species of Falco taken at the Sechang Islands, the Columba alba in great numbers, and a singular species of Columba, of a black colour and a white tail. All our endeavours to procure the latter were unsuccessful. These, with the blue-coloured Heron, and a small bird of the Passerine kind, were all that we saw here.

Of vegetable productions, we procured a hardy species of vine, Vitis Labrusca, common in the forest; it was covered with great quantities of grapes, which, though not yet quite ripe, were not ungrateful to the taste. The vine stretches along the trees, often to the distance of fifteen or twenty yards.

We found also two species of Palm, and an elegant tree of the Nat. Ord. Guttiferæ was discovered by Mr. Crawfurd; its affinity to Garcinia is well marked, but as the leading characters do not agree with those of that plant, it is not improbable that ours will form a new genus.

An elegant species of Begonia, apparently the Begonia crenata, grows in the greatest abundance on the bare rocks, and on the sides of the hills. Pandanus, Scævola, Ixora, Momordica, Calophyllum, and Erythrina, are common here; but as we had seen all the species to be found here in other places, it is unnecessary to take further notice of them. A species of Scolopendrium, usually found on trees, is here terrestrial; it grows to an immense size, the fronds being from three to four feet in length; the greater beauty of the frond, and its singular magnitude, are the only circumstances in which it differs from our Scolopendrium vulgare.

The Island Pulo Panjang is, on the whole, inhospitable, affording no temptation whatever to man to take up his abode on it. It is unprotected against the vicissitudes of the weather, it is fully exposed to the pernicious influence of either monsoon; it is steep, rugged, and unproductive, and totally destitute of level ground. It has no safe port, nor convenient anchorage, and the few streams of water that trickle down the rocks afford but a scanty and uncertain supply. The shores of the island are so near to its central ridge of mountains, that but few streams can be formed.

We lay off the island all night, and set sail at

an early hour on the following morning, after an unsuccessful attempt to procure the black pigeon we had seen here on the night before.

August 20th. — We continued an easterly course, and about noon had come in sight of False Pulo Ubi. About four a. m. of the 21st, we passed the Island of Pulo Ubi, and towards evening, the barren islands called the Two Brothers. The latter are abrupt, precipitous, and naked rocks, covered with myriads of a species of Sterna. A large and handsome species of Pelican, with a black body and white bill, was seen flying about here.

On the approach of night, we had a distinct view of Pulo Condore, a mountainous island, with a singular sharp peak in its centre. We stood towards the island till we were within six or eight miles of it, when the ship lay-to for the night.

On the morning of the 22d, we cast anchor under the shelter of a bold, elevated ridge of mountains, in a spacious and beautiful bay. After breakfast we landed on the rocks opposite, and proceeded along them until we came to an extensive sandy plain.

The physical features of Pulo Condore may be described in few words; the chief characteristic being a number of very steep ranges of hills, irregularly distributed, in some parts forming

semicircular bays, in others narrow inlets, and in the interior disposed in deep basins, ravines, and plains of small extent. It is everywhere covered with vegetation, which on those parts most exposed to the influence of the monsoon is stunted, almost exclusively herbaceous, and disposed in numerous narrow and parallel ledges; while that which grows in ravines, vallies, and other sheltered places, attains a loftier magnitude. Towards the summits of the hills, there is scarce any vegetation. The paucity of the Gramineæ in all these islands, and in all kinds of soil, is a singular circumstance in intertropical vegetation. The peculiar form and modification of vegetable life in the islands we have lately visited, as well as in this, cannot, I imagine, be altogether attributed to the influence of the monsoons.

It seems to me that much is owing to the nature of the soil, or more properly of the rocks forming these islands. In all of them the rocks are either strictly primitive, or composed of materials which once constituted such formations. In some the mountain masses are so steep, that whatever soil is formed is constantly carried off into the sea. In others, the mass is of such hardness, as scarcely to yield any detritus for ages. Such is the case here, where the rocks are composed of granite and sienite, so hard as

scarce to be fractured by any means. It detaches large and solid masses, but yields little earth. The material is besides unfavourable to the growth of plants. Yet the force of vegetation, aided by the climate, and a constant source of moisture, is such as to overcome every difficulty; and where we should expect nothing but sterility and nudity, we find all is beauty, and life, and luxuriance; so easily does nature, with means which seem to us impossible, accomplish the greatest ends.

Of the geology of this island I have little more to say than has already been mentioned, that the rocks are of the form described, and that they are composed of granite and sienite, both of extreme hardness.

On the sea-shore we found, in full blossom, several fine trees, of the Barringtonia speciosa, a tree well deserving of the encomium which its beautiful appearance has elicited from authors. We had found its seeds cast on the shores of islands in the straits of Malacca; but had not seen the tree till now. We found here several other interesting plants. Amongst them was another species of vine, the fruit of which made an excellent tart.

The only quadruped which we saw in the woods, was a large species of black squirrel. A specimen of this animal was caught alive, but

unfortunately escaped from its cage on board the ship. We were informed that monkeys and wild hogs are to be found on the island, and that of birds there is great variety.

After leaving the rocky coast and steep sides of the hills, we came to a sandy plain, several miles long, through which two considerable streams of fresh water discharge themselves into the sea.

About the middle of this plain, protected on two of its sides by an elevated sand bank, we discovered the scanty remains of what had once been an English factory or fort. Some native soldiers from Macassar, who had been in the service of our countrymen, rose upon them, and massacred the greater number, a few only escaping, by flying to their boats. This happened in 1704.

At the extremity of this plain we came to a village of considerable size, said to contain 300 inhabitants.

It is surrounded by plantations of cocoa-nut trees, which although they grow in great abundance, are rather stunted in the stem, and their fruit, as well as the fluid it contains, has a peculiar and rather bitter taste. A few scattered plants of the Ricinus communis, Jasminum, and some other low bushes, afford ample shelter to their houses, which are even lower, though neat

and apparently comfortable. Here, as in most parts of India, the Vinca rosea grew luxuriously in every part of the village. At the short distance of even fifty yards beyond it, though there was no ascertainable difference in the soil or other circumstances, you look in vain for a single plant.

We found here a numerous, interesting, and lively people, who no longer had any complexion of the savage state. The colony was originally from Cochin China, and might be supposed to be little less civilized than that accomplished people; besides the intercourse with that country is frequent. Some of the inhabitants, however, bore a strong resemblance to the Malay race. A number of boys and girls were engaged at play upon the beach; on our approach they behaved in the most respectful manner, and it was to us a sight as gratifying as it was unexpected, to find so much urbanity, hospitality, and politeness in this little community. They left off play on our approach, and being joined by several elderly persons, conducted us to an open hut, with an elevated bamboo floor, in which the chief or governor of the place was accustomed to receive visitors. We were here soon surrounded by a considerable number of respectable people, among whom there were but one or two women, who kept at a distance.

Here were mained for some time, in expectation of seeing the chief, who was rather tardy in making his appearance. This individual was a fine old man, of an animated and interesting appearance, as, indeed, were the greater number of the people, being equally removed from the clumsy, loutish form and coarse, incurious manner of the Siamese, as from the more muscular and developed frame, and the oblique and morose character of the Chinese. All the old men wore a thin, straggling beard. Our friend conversed with great animation. He had not seen an European ship for many years; he had been born on the island, which paid a tribute in turtle, and in oil obtained from that animal, to the king of Cochin China. There are several villages on the island, and the total number of the inhabitants is said to amount to 800. They subsist chiefly by the products of their fisheries, which they either carry to Cochin China, or dispose of to junks and coasting praus, in return for grain. The quantity of rice raised in the island is very limited. They have some buffaloes; fowls are common. They raise yams, pumpkins, melons, capsicum, limes, and a little Indian corn. Some cocoa-nuts were brought at our request. On our proposing to visit the houses of the inhabitants, the chief conducted us to his own, the largest and best in the place. A few spears and a tom-

tom lay before the door. A number of persons were here assembled, and in one corner of the room were the women of the chief. An old man happening to sit beside me, I endeavoured to converse with him through the medium of signs. He was much pleased with this mark of attention, and paid me many civilities, offering betel and samsoo. I took a piece of coarse white cloth, and wrapt it round his head by way of turban, at which he was quite delighted. He called to a boy, and ordered him to bring a fowl; it was in vain that I represented to him that I wished for nothing in return, and when I refused his gift, he coolly unfolded the cloth from his head in order to return it. I now gave him a small piece of money, but he was not to be overcome in this way either; and the only condition on which he would receive this also, was that of my taking two more fowls in return.

I might have added other traits of conduct favourable to the candour and disinterestedness of the simple inhabitants of Pulo Condor; but this one speaks loudly. At parting, the old man extended his arms, and expressed, in very significant terms, that he had been pleased at our meeting. The principal people, with the chief, proposed to visit us on board. I was happy to find my old friend among the number, and had

the pleasure of giving him great delight by presenting him with an English knife.

We looked here in vain for the grape mentioned by Dampier, as growing on trees in the woods. We found a species of vine, however, which afforded a grape of tolerable size, and not ungrateful to the taste. We saw numbers of trees in the forest, which the natives had cut in the manner mentioned by Dampier, for the purpose of obtaining a sort of resin or pitch.

In the evening we sailed from this place, and passed out through a wide channel towards the north, with islands on each side.

On the morning of the 23d, the high land of Cape St. James was in sight, and on the evening of the same day we came to anchor some miles off from the mouth of the river. Cape St. James is the extremity of a ridge of hills of moderate height, (about 300 feet,) forming the left bank of the mouth of the river. It is seen at a great distance; the land on the opposite side of the river is extremely low, and an extensive sand bank stretches out in front of this low land to the distance of several miles. This bank produces a singular effect at the period of ebb tide. As we were sailing along, at some distance from its outer edge, the depth of water being eleven fathoms, we observed the sea towards the land to

be of a muddy colour, and its edge quite abrupt and defined. On its border there was a distinct ripple with a slight noise, and the whole extended as far as the eye could reach. It was in rather quick motion, and advancing towards the sea, and soon left us in the middle of it. I have seen currents similar to this, but of less extent, off the Maldive Islands.

On the 24th we came to anchor, near to the Bay of Cocoa-nuts, a few miles within Point St. James, and with the evening tide stood up the river to a village called Kan-dyu. From Cape St. James to this village, the distance is about nine miles. The river here forms a fine, spacious, and beautiful bay, of a semi-circular form, being bounded on the left by the ridge of hills already mentioned. While the ship lay at anchor near to the Bay of Cocoa-nuts, we landed on the rocks opposite.

The formation of the rocks here approaches very nearly to that which we had observed at Pulo Condor; the materials of the granitic compounds were however differently aggregated, and the mass here was more easily frangible than in the former place. Granite and sienite were the only rocks we discovered; in both, small veins of a rich iron ore were observable. The granite was seamed in every direction; and it was not

possible to say that either rock was stratified. They appeared to exist in equal quantity, and to alternate with each other on the rounded sides of the hills.

We found the bamboo growing in abundance on the hills, and in a few places the Nipa fruticans. We found also an elegant species of Tradescantia, with a blue flower. We could hear the notes of the jungle cock, or Phasianus gallus, in the woods, but there were on the whole very few birds to be seen here.

As the ship was proceeding up the river with the tide, a boat came off from the village of Vung-tao, in which was an old man and six or seven others. The visit, it would appear, had been voluntary on their part; they wished to point out what they considered to be the proper course of the ship, and seemed very anxious to procure our continuance near their village during the night.. The people of this boat were affable, and remarkably polite and animated, but rather too loquacious. They were all decently clad; their common dress consisted of a close shirt of black or white cotton cloth, which reached down to the thighs; a pair of coarse loose trowsers, which reached to the knee, and a piece of coarse cloth or handkerchief, wrapped round the head. Persons in better cir-

cumstances wear a black crape turban of large size, and the other parts of their dress are made of silk.

These men stated that the principal person in authority here, resided at Kan-dyu. They offered to take a letter to him, which was sent.

On the 25th, the Chief of Kan-dyu paid us a visit on board, and took charge of an official communication, written in English and French, to the Governor of Lower Cochin China, who resides at Saigon. Mr. Crawfurd was naturally anxious to see that city, the first in the empire, in respect of commercial importance; and in his communication requested permission to visit the place, and to confer with the Governor on the subject of his mission.

Whilst we waited here for an answer from Saigon, we paid occasional visits to the neighbouring village of Kan-dyu, built upon the banks of a creek, in a situation somewhat swampy, the banks being shaded with mangrove. The manners of the people here were so different from those of the Siamese, that we could not but feel both surprised and pleased at the contrast. The Governor of Kan-dyu is a singular character in many respects: he is upwards of sixty years of age, has a long, spare, lanky visage, in which he exhibits, in the most lively and animated manner, a considerable variety of passion. It was truly

ludicrous to see with what rapidity his features passed from the serious to the whimsical, from vacancy to the intensity of anger or disappointment. The manners of the people in general were polite, I should say refined; they were kind, attentive, and obliging; they courted rather than shunned our society, and seemed to have less of the weakness or ostentation of natural pride than any of the tribes we had yet met. Their curiosity was naturally excited by the contrast which they could not but draw between themselves and us, but in the gratification of this feeling, or in its expression, was neither coarseness nor absence of good-breeding; and the greatest liberty they ventured to assume was that of simply touching our dress, with the design, I presume, of ascertaining the materials of its texture, they themselves having little notion of any other fit for this purpose than silk, in which all ranks are almost exclusively clothed.

In point of stature, the Cochin-Chinese are below the standard of the Malays and Siamese; they are at the same time less bulky, and less clumsily made, yet even they too have something of squatness in their figure. The general form of the face is round, and that in an extraordinary degree; it is short, the direct and transverse diameters being very nearly equal. The forehead is short, but broad; the cheek-bones wide,

not particularly salient; the chin is large and broad; they want the fulness of the coronoid process of the lower jaw, so large in the Malays and Siamese. The affinity to the Tartar race is obvious, but less so than in the former. The beard is grisly and thin; the hair coarse, copious and black; the eyes are more round than those of the Chinese or Siamese, they are also smaller, but more lively; they are, as usual, intensely black. The nose is small, but well formed, without flatness or alar expansion; the lips are moderately thick; the cheeks are destitute of hair, and the beard, as has been said, is very scanty. The general form of the head is globular.

There is no unusual degree of obesity at any age. In females, at an early period, it is, however, more developed than in men. The body is well proportioned, and the limbs are well made, though for the most part small. The colour is remarkably fair; in many it is more so than is that of the inhabitants of the southern parts of Europe.

They are good-natured, polite, attentive, and indulgent to strangers. Their manners are agreeable, and they are for the most part found in a lively, playful humour, and strongly disposed to indulge in mirth. They are the gayest of Orientals, yet the transition from mirth to sorrow, and the more hateful and mean passions,

seems to cost them nothing; it is as rapid as it is unaccountable, insomuch that to a stranger their conduct appears quite unreasonable, as well as fickle. Like the monkey race, their attention is perpetually changing from one object to another.

The houses are large and comfortable, constructed in general with mud walls, and roofed with tiles. The palm-leaf is but little used. The interior disposition of the house is somewhat peculiar. About one half forms an open hall, in which they receive visitors, transact business, and, if shop-keepers, dispose their wares. In the back part of this hall is placed an altar, and other emblems of religion. The private apartments are disposed in recesses behind; these are in the form of square chambers, open on one side only. Their beds are formed of a bench raised about a foot, and covered with mats.

The costume of the Cochin Chinese is more convenient than elegant. In both sexes it is much alike, consisting of two or more loose gowns with long sleeves, reaching to the knee, and buttoned close round the neck. Beneath this they wear a pair of wide pantaloons, and, on occasions of ceremony, persons of distinction throw a large black mantle of flowered silk over the whole. The head is covered with a turban

of crape; that of the men is in general black. Over the turbans, females wear a large hat, similar to a basket.

Dress is with all ranks an object of great attention; even the poorest among them are clothed from head to foot, and the populace thus make a more decent and respectable appearance than other eastern nations.

At this place we entered several of the houses, and were entertained with kindness and hospitality. The bazar of Kan-dyu is well supplied with fish, ducks, fowls, eggs, and whatever else is necessary for the comfort of the natives. The shops are individually poor, and almost every house is a shop. They are in general held by women. If they furnish little to gratify the curiosity of a European, they supply in abundance all that is necessary and useful to the native inhabitants. The practice of smoking tobacco is universal, as is that of chewing betel. Their *cheroots* are made by wrapping the tobacco up in paper.

On the morning of the 28th of August, an answer was received from the Governor of Saigon, who despatched a mandarin of rank to wait upon the Agent to the Governor General, and to invite him to visit the city. He was accompanied by several lesser mandarins, and had brought with him three large, handsome,

and highly ornamented barges, for the accommodation of the Agent to the Governor General. The larger contained from thirty to forty rowers each. The rowers were dressed in coarse red cloth, faced with yellow. They wore a light cap, surmounted with a plume of feathers. Thus dressed, they made a very handsome appearance. Every thing here is done by soldiers; the meanest offices fall to their lot, and these rowers were a detachment of the military force.

Mr. Crawfurd was doubtful whether he should have time to visit Saigon, as it was possible he might be delayed there, until it was too late to get to Turon, the south-west monsoon being about to cease. The mandarin assured him that he should be permitted to return in three days, and used such arguments as convinced us that they were very anxious that he should visit the Governor of Saigon.

On this assurance of the mandarin, Mr. Crawfurd consented to go, and asked me to accompany him. Being uncertain how we should be received, he left instructions with Captain Dangerfield to sail in the course of ten days, in the event of his not hearing from him in that time; to proceed to Turon, and to communicate his arrival to the court. Lieutenant Rutherford was to accompany him. Mrs. Crawfurd remained also on board.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Author proceeds to Saigon.—River of Saigon.—Saigon.—Superstitious Emblems.—M. Diard.—Cochin Chinese Females and Morality.—Markets.—Manufactures.—Bingeh and Saigon.—Fort.—Conference respecting the Governor General's Letter.—Retinue of the Mandarins.—Hospitality of the Chinese Settlers.—Audience of the Governor of Saigon.—Combat between a Tiger and Elephants.—Proceed to Turon.—Coast of Cochin China.—Fishing Tribes.—Boats.—Turon Bay.—Geology, &c.—Visit Turon.—A limited Number allowed to visit Hue.—Wretched Accommodations for the Passage.

At six, P.M., we left the ship, a salute being fired on the occasion, and the ship's crew giving us three cheers. The barge selected for our accommodation was comfortably as well as elegantly finished. Continuing to row all night, notwithstanding that it rained incessantly, we were at day-light but a short way from Saigon, and reached it at nine, A.M. Each boat is furnished with a suitable number of officers. The discipline of the men rests chiefly with the second, whose rank may be equal to that of serjeant or corporal. He cheers the rowers by the repetition of a few wild notes, which can scarce

deserve the name of a song; and he beats time to the stroke of the oar by means of two short sticks of hard wood. The discipline of these soldiers is severe, for even this petty officer has the power of inflicting several hundred lashes of the rattan for slight offences. The rattan is kept in constant exercise, as we found on our arrival at the town.

The river of Saigon is about the size of that of Siam, but appears to carry a greater body of water. It is navigable to ships of all sizes. It is less tortuous than most rivers, and its waters are less turbid. Its banks are mostly covered with mangrove. We found amongst them a very elegant species of Rhizophora, but observed no cultivation until we were within twenty or thirty miles of the town. The number of boats that were passing and repassing was but infrequent. As we approached the town, we were surprised to find it of such extent. It is built chiefly on the right bank of the river. We had already passed a distance of several miles, and were still in the midst of it. The houses are large, very wide, and for the climate, very comfortable. The roof is tiled, and supported on handsome large pillars, of a heavy, durable, black wood, called Sao. The walls are formed of mud, enclosed in frames of bamboo and plastered. The floor is boarded, and elevated

several feet from the ground. The houses are placed close to each other, disposed in straight lines, along spacious and well-aired streets, or on the banks of canals. The plan of the streets is superior to that of many European capitals.

We were now conducted to a house that had been prepared to receive us. Several thousands of the people, besides a numerous guard of soldiers, armed with lances, were collected to receive us. The crowd conducted themselves with a degree of propriety, order, decency, and respect, that was alike pleasing as it was novel to us. All of them were dressed, and the greater number in a very comfortable manner. They all appeared to us remarkably small; the rotundity of their face, and liveliness of their features, were particularly striking. The mandarin who had accompanied, conducted us to our house, and placed us in the hall, upon benches covered with mats, opposite to each other. A number of people were in attendance to take up our baggage, and to make such arrangements in our quarters as we should deem necessary. The house was one of the best in the place. It was difficult to say, whether it partook more of the temple, or of the court of justice. In every house, in every building, whether public or private, even in the slightest temporary sheds, is placed something to remind you of religion, or,

to speak more accurately, of the superstitious disposition of the people; and, as the emblems of this nature have for the most part a brilliant appearance, they produce an effect as agreeable to the first glance as it is striking. At one end of this hall was an altar, dedicated to Fo, ornamented with various emblematical figures, and hung round with inscriptions. It was easy to perceive, that affairs of state and of religion were here inseparable. Each partakes of the same gold and the same varnish. Immediately behind this, were placed our private apartments. A crowd of soldiers at all times filled the court and the ante-room, and a guard was placed in attendance at the gate and wicket.

At noon, two mandarins of justice came to confer with the Agent to the Governor General. We received them upon our benches, immediately in front of the altar of Fo. They were men that had passed the age of fifty, short in stature, of easy and affable manners. They were dressed in black turbans, and black robes of silk. They commenced the conversation by making inquiries respecting our accommodations; then turned to the objects of the mission, inquiring how long since we had left Bengal; whether the letter for the king of Cochin China was from the king of England, or from the Governor General of India; what were the precise objects

of the mission; whether we had orders to visit Saigon, or the contrary; and if we had been at the court of Siam. To all of these queries the answers were so plain and so candid, that it seemed impossible they could either misunderstand or misrepresent them. On one or two subjects, they shewed the greatest anxiety. We were earnestly and repeatedly asked, if we came into their country with friendly or with hostile intentions. This subject was urged with so much earnestness, that it was impossible not to forgive their fears, though groundless, and to participate in feelings which appeared to proceed solely from the love they bore their country.

They now requested that the letter to the king of Cochin China should be sent for, in order that the Governor or Viceroy of Saigon might be enabled to forward a translation to court, together with a full report upon the subject of our visit, but it was thought improper to comply with this request for the present. They seemed quite satisfied with the answers that were given, and continued the interview for nearly six hours, conversing almost all the while on matters of business. Before their departure they ordered provisions for our use; and soon after arrived a living pig, ducks, fowls, eggs, sugar, plantains, and rice.

In the evening, we were visited by M. Diard,

a lively and well-educated Frenchman, of the medical profession, who had been led into these countries by his desire to prosecute subjects of natural history. He had already traversed most of the Indian islands, in which he has made numerous and valuable zoological discoveries, the subject which has principally attracted his attention. Already he has discovered four or five new species of Simia, and as many species of the genus Sciurus. In Java, he discovered that the large deer of that place was a species altogether unknown to naturalists. He thinks that he has discovered a fourth species of Rhinoceros, and is satisfied that the Sumatran species is a distinct one. The number of new species of birds which he has discovered is very considerable. M. Diard is evidently a man of great enterprise and acuteness, and admirably qualified for the arduous pursuit in which he is engaged. He is fond of adventure, and ingenious in overcoming obstacles. From him we may expect a full account of the zoology of these countries. He has wisely assumed the costume, and adopted the manners of the people among whom he resides. If there be any thing amiss in the character of Diard, it is, (and it is with hesitation and doubt that I make the remark,) perhaps, a disposition to over-rate the number, extent, and value of his discoveries; and perhaps too, an

ardour of zeal, which may be apt to lead one beyond the precise limits of accurate observation. He has been about a year in Cochin China, and four months at this place. It is with the greatest difficulty that he can obtain from the government permission to visit any part of the interior. He had but very few objects of natural history, in consequence, to shew us.

August 30*th.*—On going out in the morning, the guard placed at the gate seemed doubtful whether he ought to let me pass. On my approach, however, he drew back respectfully; but strenuously objected to allow any of our people to pass the gate, till seeing me wait for the painter, he permitted him to accompany me. An early visit to the market-places served to confirm the observations I have already made respecting the manners of the people. The Cochin Chinese cannot, I think, be considered as a handsome people in any way, yet, amongst the females, there are many that are even handsome, as well as remarkably fair, and their manners are engaging, without possessing any of that looseness of character which, according to the relation of French travellers, prevails amongst this people. The conduct of both sexes is agreeable to the strictest decorum. Chastity, in which they have been accused to be wanting, would appear to be observed, in the married

state, with as much strictness as amongst their neighbours, or any other Asiatic nation. The breach of it is held criminal, disgraceful, and liable to punishment. It is not so, however, with regard to young and unmarried females. Here the utmost latitude is allowed, and, for a trifling pecuniary consideration, the father will deliver up his daughter to the embraces of the stranger or visitor. No disgrace, no stigma, attaches to the character of the female, nor does this sort of connexion subsequently prevent her from procuring a suitable husband.

Such commodities as are used by the natives were to be found in great abundance in every bazar. No country, perhaps, produces more betel or areca-nut than this. Betel-leaf less abundantly; fish, salted and fresh; rice, sweet potatoes, of excellent quality, Indian corn, the young shoots of the bamboo, prepared by boiling; rice, in the germinating state, coarse sugar, plantains, oranges, pumeloes, custard apples, pomegranates, and tobacco, were to be had in the greatest quantity. Pork is sold in every bazar, and poultry of an excellent description is very cheap. Alligator's flesh is held in great esteem, and our Chinese interpreter states that dog's flesh is sold here.

The shops are of convenient size, in which the wares are disposed to the best advantage. One

circumstance it was impossible to overlook, as it exhibits a marked difference of taste and manners in this people from that of the nations of India. Articles of European manufacture have, amongst the latter, in many instances, usurped the use of their own; and you can scarce name any thing of European manufacture which is not to be had in the bazars. Here, with the sole exception of three or four case bottles, of coarse glass, there was no article whatever to be found that bore the least resemblance to any thing European. A different standard of taste prevails. A piece of cotton cloth was scarce to be seen. Crapes, satins, and silks, are alone in use, the greater number of them the manufacture of China or of Tonquin, there being, in fact, little or no manufacturing industry here.

The articles which they themselves had made were not numerous. I may specify the following: handsome and coarse mats, matting for the sails of boats and junks, coarse baskets, gilt and varnished boxes, umbrellas, handsome silk purses, in universal use, and carried both by men and women; iron nails, and a rude species of scissors. Every thing else was imported from the surrounding countries. In exchange, their territory affords rice in abundance, cardamoms, pepper, sugar, ivory, betel, *&c.* There are a few wealthy Chinese who carry on an extensive

trade here; the bulk of the people is miserably poor, and but few amongst them are in a condition to trade but upon the most limited scale. Few of the shops in the bazars appear to contain goods of greater value than might be purchased for forty or sixty dollars, and the greater number are not worth half that sum.

It is difficult to conceive that a population so extensive can exist together in this form, with trade on so small a scale: there are, in fact, two cities here, each of them as large as the capital of Siam. That more recently built is called Bingeh; the other, situated at the distance of a mile or two, is called Saigon. The former is contiguous to a fortress which has been constructed of late years, on the principles of European fortification. It is furnished with a regular glacis, wet ditch, and a high rampart, and commands the surrounding country. It is of a square form, and each side is about half a mile in extent. It is in an unfinished state, no embrasures being made, nor cannon mounted on the rampart. The zig-zag is very short, the passage into the gate straight; the gates are handsome, and ornamented in the Chinese style. We could not procure any information respecting the population of the two cities.

A mandarin of higher rank, together with the two we saw yesterday, came to transact business

with the Agent of the Governor General; a protracted conversation, in all respects similar to that which had taken place yesterday, was commenced by him. He insisted that the letter, as well as Mr. Crawfurd's credentials, should be sent for; this point was acceded to, and a boat was immediately despatched to the ship, for the letter to the King of Cochin China. The mandarins continued with us till a late hour in the evening.

31*st*, at *eleven* a. m.—The letter arrived, and in the course of an hour thereafter, the mandarins who had visited us first, came to ascertain its authenticity, and to report upon the contents of it. It was late in the evening before they could be made to understand the subject of it, or the nature of the Governor General's proposals respecting commerce. An English copy of the letter, and translations in Portuguese and Chinese, were furnished to them. M. Diard was present at, and took a part in, the conferences that were held with the mandarins.

Sept. 1*st*.—It would appear that the Governor of Saigon had no objections to offer upon the subject of the documents which had been furnished yesterday; a mandarin now returned for copies of them, stating that those which had been first furnished were to be immediately despatched to Court. As soon as these had been furnished,

we set out in a boat with M. Diard, to visit Saigon. The distance of this town from the citadel is about three miles, but there are houses along the banks of the river the greater part of the way. The paucity of junks and coasting vessels in the river was accounted for by the lateness of the season. The number of boats that were passing and repassing was, however, very considerable. The country here presented the appearance of extreme fertility; the banks were covered with areca and cocoa-nut trees, plantains, jack, and other fruit-trees. Numerous navigable canals intersect the country in every direction, offering every facility for the increase of commercial industry. Here, as in Siam, the more laborious occupations are often performed by women, and the boats upon the river are in general rowed by them. A practice, as ungallant as it is unjust, prevails both here and in Siam; that of making females only to pay for being ferried across rivers, the men passing always free. The reason alleged for the practice is, that the men are all supposed to be employed on the King's service. It is lamentable to observe how large a proportion of the men in this country are employed in occupations that are totally unproductive to the state, as well as subversive of national industry. Every petty mandarin is attended by a multitude of persons.

The town of Saigon is built upon a considerable branch of the great river, and upon the banks of numerous canals. It is the centre of the commerce of this fertile province, the town of Bingeh being but little engaged in such pursuits. A few settlers from China carry on trade on an extensive scale, but the Cochin Chinese are for the most part too poor to engage in occupations of this nature.

We landed about the middle of the town, and after proceeding a short way, we entered the house of a Chinese. He received us with great civility, and invited us to partake of refreshments; he said that he was anxious for traffic with the English, and had now upon his hands commodities suited for that trade.

We passed several hours in visiting various parts of the town, and returned to our quarters in the evening highly gratified with all we had seen, and with the most favourable impression of the manners and disposition of the people. The attention, kindness, and hospitality we experienced, so far exceeded what we had hitherto observed of Asiatic nations, that we could not but fancy ourselves among a people of entirely different character. We were absolute strangers, who had come to pass a few hours only in the town; yet in almost every street we were invited by the more wealthy Chinese to enter their

houses, and to partake of refreshments. They could not have known beforehand that we were to visit the place, yet some of the entertainments laid out for us were in a style of elegance and abundance that bespoke the affluence, as well as the hospitality, of our hosts.

Amongst others, we were invited by three brothers who had been settled in the country for some time. They wore the Cochin-Chinese dress, and in appearance differed but little from the native inhabitants. Their manners were engaging, perfectly easy and polite; their house was both handsome and spacious, nor did any thing appear wanting to render it a very superior mansion, even in the opinion of an European. They received us in a large, well furnished ante-room; a table was soon covered with a profusion of fruit, the most delicate sweetmeats, and a variety of cakes and jellies. They insisted upon attending us at table themselves, nor could they be induced to seat themselves while we were present. Tea was served out to us in small cups; a large table was also spread for our followers, who were supplied with sweetmeats in profusion. Our hosts conversed but little; they were apparently as much pleased with our visit, as we with the kind reception they had given us.

Let others say from what motives so much

hospitality and attention were bestowed upon perfect strangers by these intelligent and liberal-minded Chinese; for my own part, I must do them the justice to believe that they were of the most disinterested nature.

The bazars of Saigon contain in greater abundance all that is to be found in those of Bingeh. Coarse china and Tonquin crapes, silks and satins, Chinese fans, porcelain, &c., are the more common wares in the shops. The streets are straight, wide, and convenient. The population extensive. We entered a very handsome Chinese temple, built in good taste, and highly ornamented. The Cochin Chinese temples, though apparently dedicated to the same objects of worship, are of inferior appearance.

Sept. 2d.—We were told that the Governor would give an audience to the Agent of the Governor General at an early hour. About ten a.m. the mandarin, who had conducted us from the ship, came to say that the Governor waited our arrival. Being asked what conveyance had been prepared for us, he said that we must proceed on foot. This being objected to, five elephants were sent for. These were furnished with haudahs, such as are used by the natives of India. A few minutes brought us into the citadel, where the Governor resides. His house, though large, is plain, and without ornament, in

the interior or exterior. It is situated nearly in the centre of the fort, in an open space. When we had arrived within fifty yards of the entrance, we were requested to descend from our elephants, and to proceed the remainder of the way on foot. A crowd of soldiers, armed chiefly with spears, occupied both sides of the court. The Governor, surrounded by the mandarins, was seated in a large hall, open in front. We advanced directly in front of him, and taking off our hats, saluted him according to the manner of our country. Chairs had been provided, and we took our seats a little in front, and to the right of the mandarins. In the back part of the hall sat the Governor, upon a plain, elevated platform, about twelve feet square, and covered with mats, on which were laid one or two cushions. On a lower platform to his left, and a little in front, was seated the Deputy Governor, a fine-looking old man, who appeared to have passed the age of seventy. Directly opposite to the latter about a dozen mandarins, dressed in black silk robes, were seated in the Indian manner, on a platform similar to that opposite; and behind these stood a number of armed attendants, crowded into one place. In front of the Governor, two Siamese, who had come hither on their private affairs, lay prostrate on the ground, in the manner that they attend upon their own chiefs.

The Governor of Saigon is reputed an eunuch, and his appearance in some degree countenances that notion. He is apparently about fifty years of age, has an intelligent look, and may be esteemed to possess considerable activity both of mind and body: his face is round and soft, his features flabby and wrinkled; he has no beard, and bears considerable resemblance to an old woman: his voice, too, is shrill and feminine; but this I have observed, though in a less degree, in other males of this nation. His dress is not merely plain, but almost sordid, and to the sight as mean as that of the poorest persons.

He had requested that the letter from the Governor General of Bengal should be brought with us to the audience. Seeing it in my hand, he inquired what it was I held; and having examined the gold cloth in which it was contained, he returned it, at the same time observing that having, according to the custom of the country, taken copies, it must not be again opened.

He now inquired how long it was since we left Calcutta, and what our respective ages were. He observed that it was customary for kings only to write to kings;—"How then," said he, "can the Governor General of Bengal address a letter to the King of Cochin China?" He seemed to comprehend what the objects of the mission were, and to view them in a favourable light. "All

ships," he observed, "are permitted to trade with Cochin China. If," he continued, "the subjects of the King of Cochin China visit Bengal or any other British settlement, it is right that while there they should be amenable to the laws of the country, and be judged by them. In like manner the subjects of other nations resorting to Cochin China must be governed and judged by the laws in use in that country; that otherwise there could be no strict justice." He asked if we were going direct to Turon, or the port of Hué, and what conduct the Agent of the Governor General meant to pursue on arriving at that place. He was told that a report of our arrival should be immediately forwarded to court from that place; on which he observed that the mandarin of elephants was in charge of matters of this nature, and would give all requisite information on the subject of commercial affairs.

I have above described, in general terms, the nature and extent of the conversation that transpired. The mandarins appeared to be perfectly at their ease in the presence of the Governor, exhibiting neither fear nor awe of any kind. They frequently addressed questions to us during the interview. The conversation was carried on through the medium of the Portuguese language, by means of a native called Antonio.

Towards the close of the conversation, M.

Diard came in, dressed in the style of a mandarin, and took his seat beside us. Tea was offered to us, according to the usual custom.

In front of the hall was a cage containing a very large tiger, which the governor had caused to be caught, in order that he might exhibit to us a fight between that fiercest of animals, and the elephant. We were asked if the spectacle would be agreeable to us, and on our replying in the affirmative, he gave the necessary directions on the subject. In the midst of a grassy plain, about half a mile long, and nearly as much in breadth, about sixty or seventy fine elephants were drawn up in several ranks, each animal being provided with a mahawat and a hauda, which was empty. On one side were placed convenient seats; the governor, mandarins, and a numerous train of soldiers being also present at the spectacle. A crowd of spectators occupied the side opposite. The tiger was bound to a stake, placed in the centre of the plain, by means of a stout rope fastened round his loins. We soon perceived how unequal was the combat; the claws of the poor animal had been torn out, and a strong stitch bound the lips together, and prevented him from opening his mouth. On being turned loose from the cage, he attempted to bound over the plain, but finding all attempts to extricate himself useless, he threw himself

at length upon the grass, till seeing a large elephant with long tusks approach, he got up and faced the coming danger. The elephant was by this attitude, and the horrid growl of the tiger, too much intimidated, and turned aside, while the tiger pursued him heavily, and struck him with his fore paw upon the hind quarter, quickening his pace not a little. The mahawat succeeded in bringing the elephant to the charge again before he had gone far, and this time he rushed on furiously, driving his tusks into the earth under the tiger, and lifting him up fairly, gave him a clear cast to the distance of about thirty feet. This was an interesting point in the combat; the tiger lay along on the ground as if he were dead, yet it appeared that he had received no material injury, for on the next attack, he threw himself into an attitude of defence, and as the elephant was again about to take him up, he sprung upon his forehead, fixing his hind feet upon the trunk of the former. The elephant was wounded in this attack, and so much frightened, that nothing could prevent him from breaking through every obstacle, and fairly running off. The mahawat was considered to have failed in his duty, and soon after was brought up to the governor with his hands bound behind his back, and on the spot received a hundred lashes of the rattan.

Another elephant was now brought, but the tiger made less resistance on each successive attack. It was evident that the tosses he received must soon occasion his death. All the elephants were furnished with tusks, and the mode of attack in every instance, for several others were called forward, was that of rushing upon the tiger, thrusting their tusks under him, raising him, and throwing him to a distance. Of their trunks they evidently were very careful; rolling them cautiously up under the chin. When the tiger was perfectly dead, an elephant was brought up, who, instead of raising the tiger on his tusks, seized him with his trunk, and in general cast him to the distance of thirty feet.

The tiger fight was succeeded by the representation of a combat of a different description. The object of it was, to shew with what steadiness a line of elephants was capable of advancing upon, and passing the lines of the enemy. A double line of entrenchments was thrown up, and in front of it was placed upon sticks, a quantity of combustible matter, with fire-works of various descriptions, and a few small pieces of artillery. In an instant the whole was in a blaze, and a smart fire was kept up. The elephants advanced in line, at a steady and rapid pace, but though they went close up to the fire, there were very few that could be forced to pass it, of all

them shuffling round it in some way or other. This attack was repeated a second time, and put an end to the amusements.

The governor now called us to the place where he was seated, and said it would be agreeable to him if we would remain another day, to see the city; and that a comedy should be prepared for our amusement. Mr. Crawfurd stated our reasons for wishing to depart, and we took our leave of him, much gratified with the attention he had shewn us.

Sept. 3rd.—The boats we had come in were in attendance at an early hour. We embarked at six a.m., and reached the ship about five p.m. of the same day.

On the following morning, we weighed anchor, and continued our voyage to Turon with a strong s.w. wind. On going out of the river, the ship had very nearly struck upon a shoal or bank, not marked in the charts.

Sept. 14th.—The voyage from Cape St. James to the western bound of the bay of Turon, was accomplished in moderate weather, and with a fair wind, until we approached the bay, when the winds, though light, became contrary. We have in consequence been off this point for the last four days, without being able to get into the harbour though so near, a strong current, apparently from the gulf of Tonquin, carrying

the ship to the westward. The coast of Cochin China, from Cape St. James to the bay of Turon, is singularly bold and picturesque. A continuous and lofty chain of mountains stretches throughout the whole of this distance, in the direction of the sea-coast, that is from S.E. to N.W. There rarely intervenes any considerable distance between the mountains and the sea-shore, the latter being either abrupt, bold, and precipitous, or begirt with a narrow sandy beach. The ranges of hills are numerous, and for the most part are seen to rise above each other in gradual succession, as they recede from the sea. Their abrupt, acuminated, and ridgy forms, their steril summits, their steep flanks, leave little room to doubt that the greater part, and the whole of the western half of these mountains are granitic. Near to the middle of the chain, they become less bold and less elevated, while their forms are rounded at top. With this change, increased fertility of the soil, and a country better adapted for the support of man, comes into view. Here human industry struggles against the inequality of the soil. Numerous fields are observed to occupy the sides of the hills, and a vast fleet of boats plying in the open sea, indicates the existence of a numerous population. Some of the islands along the coast are also cultivated in a similar manner. Indian corn, the smaller

kinds of grain, as the Cynosurus coracanus, some species of pulse, yams, sweet potatoes, and capsicum, are all that such soils can be expected to produce; and together with an abundant supply of fish, would appear to constitute the food of the inhabitants of this part of the coast. Their boats are in shape similar to those of the Malays, but are differently rigged, having a large square shaped sail in the middle, and one at each end, somewhat similar to the former. At a distance they look like small ships. They are extremely numerous, several hundreds of them being sometimes in sight, and all under sail. They are not to be induced to visit ships upon their passage this way.

Such numerous fleets of boats naturally suggest scenes of industry, social happiness, and domestic comfort, connected with them. We imagine that in them we see the active aim that is to furnish to thousands of their fellow-citizens a large proportion of their daily sustenance. We imagine that this numerous body of men cannot but acquire wealth themselves, while they at the same time enrich the state. How different the picture which a more close inspection portrays! With scarce a rag of clothes to cover them; without either house or home, other than that which their frail bark, covered with a sorry matting, affords, with a scanty supply of poor and

perhaps, unwholesome, food; in this way does a numerous but wretched population lead a life of misery. The more barbarous of the *Orang Laut* are not more squalid, or more wretched, than many of the fishing tribes that occupy the coasts of Cochin China. The facility with which subsistence, though a miserable one, is to be procured in this occupation, will account for the great numbers that are engaged in fishing. It requires no funds, and but little industry, to put a family in the way of providing for itself. Hence every boat is for the most part the residence of a single family, and as the source from which they derive their subsistence is inexhaustible, there appears to be no limit to the increase of marriages amongst them. A man of ordinary industry is capable of constructing with his own hands, the machinery and materials necessary for the existence of himself and family. Of these, the boat is the principal and an indispensable part, and here we observe a much cheaper and easier mode of constructing them than is generally adopted throughout these seas. The practice of hollowing out single trees must be painful, tedious, and difficult. The Cochin Chinese have substituted, in its stead, a sort of basket work, of very close texture, of which they form both the bottom and the greater part of the sides of the boat. This close basket-work, or

matting, is made of split rattans, and being stretched upon the frame, is well covered with pitch. The upper work is, however, formed of one or two planks, and the boat is further strengthened by a deck of the same materials. In the centre there is a small space covered with matting, the sole accommodation of the occupiers; bamboos serve for masts; the bark of trees is made into tackling; a few mats, sewed together, are the only sails, all of which, as well as fishing nets and lines, are made by every man for his own use. Thus equipped, they launch into the deep, carrying with them all that they possess, wander from bay to bay in quest of a subsistence, which their squalid and wretched forms would lead us to believe to be precarious and inadequate. Though for the most part under the shelter of a bold and rocky coast, they are to be found at times far out at sea. The night and their idle time are invariably spent under the shade of trees, or on some sandy beach. Here they indolently saunter away their time till necessity again calls for exertion. Their share of toil may be considered moderate; the structure of their boats being such as to admit of their sailing with all winds, and in every direction.

On the 15*th September*, we succeeded in gaining the bay of Turon. A salute of twenty-one guns was fired from the ship as soon as she

had cast anchor; a small fort on shore returned three.

The bay of Turon is completely land-locked, and were its entrance as easy as its interior is safe, it would be justly numbered among the best of harbours. The difficulty we experienced in gaining it was no doubt, in some degree, to be attributed to the lateness of the season, the contrary winds having by this time set in, which together with a current of great strength, carried the ship to the westward.

We found ourselves here transported as it were into a fine, tranquil lake, surrounded almost on every hand by bold and lofty hills, covered with wood to their summit. Though there was here an assemblage of all that is usually considered favourable to the production and developement of the rich and beautiful in natural scenery, the general effect fell short of our expectation. We had, in fact, passed beyond that favoured belt of the equatorial region, on which nature has so lavishly bestowed her richest and most striking beauties. The activity and energy of vegetable life, which had so often attracted our admiration by the vast and varied forms to which it gave birth, was no longer sustained. A prospect more steril, and less varied, met the eye. A soil more than usually barren, supported more stunted forms of arborescent vege-

tation. Extensive sandy beaches for the most part surrounded the shores, except where they are rendered more bold by the projection of granitic rocks. The great extent of the bay, indeed, forming a basin of a circular form, the serrated tops of the mountain ridges, partially enveloped in mist and gray clouds, the number of boats that are always to be seen sailing to and fro, and the bold forms of a few rocks, confer upon this harbour a peculiar interest. In point of scenery, however, it is greatly inferior to that of Trincomalee, to which the absence of cultivated land, and the want of human habitations, assimilate it in other respects. Here and there on the shores of the bay are to be found the huts of a few wretched creatures who live by fishing: whilst agriculture may be said to have no existence. Neither the betel, nor the cocoa-nut, is to be seen, nor a palm of any description; a few acres of rice ground are scarcely deserving of mention. The sweet potatoe and the Sesamum orientale thrive better; yet every thing indicates an ungrateful soil.

To the botanist, the mountains that surround the bay afford a field for researches as interesting, as it is inexhaustible. It would be difficult to specify any locality that produces a greater variety of plants than this. The taller wood on the hills being cut down for fuel, appears to be

highly favourable to the production of herbaceous plants. The daily excursions of our party were the means of adding many valuable plants to my collection. To the kindness of Mr. Crawfurd, I am indebted for a considerable portion of these; he not only gave directions for the necessary accommodations for my servants, who had by this time become experienced collectors, but was himself successful in making discoveries.

When we had been some hours at anchor, a mandarin of respectable appearance came off, accompanied by a considerable number of followers, dressed in uniform. This mandarin was a remarkable contrast to the generality of his countrymen. He talked but little, and that very slowly; he asked few questions, yet shewed considerable curiosity. He was about forty years of age, had a thin person, short stature, and like the rest of his countrymen, a round face. His manners were uncommonly good. He was well dressed, according to the costume of the country. It is scarcely requisite to observe that the object of his visit was to ascertain whence we came, and what were our views. We learned from him that our arrival had been expected for some time. He inquired first of all, if the letter for the King of Cochin China was from the King of England: he then desired to have a list of the names of the persons on board.

After remaining several hours, he took his leave, stating that he should report the arrival of the mission to his superior, the chief mandarin of Fai-Foh, he himself being a mandarin of letters, and chief of the village of Turon.

This man returned on board on several occasions; on one of which he carried with him a letter from the chief of Fai-Foh to the Agent of the Governor-General, together with presents of fish, fruit, ducks, fowls, pigs, and a bullock. It was rumoured that we should be invited to visit Fai-Foh, while an answer was expected from the capital. This appears, however, to have been merely a vague rumour, and we have heard nothing further of it since.

20th Sept.—Mr. Crawfurd visited the mandarin of Turon, who had been now several times on board. Lieut. Rutherford and myself accompanied him on this occasion. The village of Turon lies nearly three miles distant from the usual place of anchorage. The approach to it is through an extensive shallow bank, which lies against the mouth of the river; at which place, and on the left bank, there is a small, nearly quadrangular fort, surrounded by walls of sand and a ditch. On the opposite side of the river, at a considerable distance, we observed several redoubts. The walls of the fort were well manned as we approached; every man was

armed either with a lance or musket, and these alternated with each other. The appearance they made was rather imposing.

We proceeded to a public building, where, after waiting for a short time, we were joined by the mandarin. Refreshments were ordered, and he conversed on indifferent subjects. A number of attendants, all of them well dressed, occupied the room. Some of them were seated at a distance on low platforms, while others stood erect. We were soon after joined by a mandarin of the army, commander of the fort, and equal in rank to the other man. He was a little, meagre, smart man, about the middle age. His dress was superior to that of the other, more in point of quality than in form. He was accompanied by about thirty well-dressed soldiers, armed with spears. He excused himself, on account of sickness, for not waiting upon Mr. Crawfurd sooner.

Taking our leave of the mandarins, we passed on to the village. It is disposed in a straggling form, along the bank of the river, to the distance of a mile or more. The houses are neat, comfortable, and clean. They are generally surrounded by a paling of small sticks. We observed little or no culture of any sort. The Jatropha curcas formed hedges; the Calophyllum inophyllum shaded walks. A few Convol-

vuli and other flowers were all that we found here. The bazar is an indifferent one, but poorly supplied even with fish. The people behaved towards us with remarkable civility.

23rd.—Each day adds considerably to the number of our plants.

In the evening, the mandarin of Turon came on board, accompanied by an interpreter, who spoke the Portuguese language, from the capital. He came to inform Mr. Crawfurd, that two barges had been sent from Hué for the purpose of taking him to that place; that these would afford accommodation for ten persons, and requested that no more than that number might be brought, for that his orders on the subject were peremptory.

This communication was a disappointment to us all. Our curiosity, augmented and heightened by what little we had already seen of the country, was thus doomed to be disappointed at the very moment we thought its gratification within our reach. It was evident that the whole party could not proceed to the capital; and yet it may be supposed that all were anxious to see a country so little known and so little frequented by Europeans,—a country which, adopting the example, and policy, and discipline of European nations, yet not involving itself in the slightest

degree in their interests, or the dangers of their influence, has, within the period of a few years, made advances in civilization, in political strength, and in military science, which render it formidable to the surrounding nations.

After much discussion, it was finally agreed, that fifteen persons, including the crew of the ship's long boat, required for the transport of our baggage, should be allowed to proceed.

It next remained to be decided what persons were to accompany Mr. Crawfurd. Captain Dangerfield, his assistant, represented that his situation gave him the first claim, and that he would not waive it without sufficient reason, an argument which was forgotten when Mr. Crawfurd represented that I spoke the Portuguese language, and that therefore I should be more useful on this occasion than one who did not. Matters being thus arranged, the requisite number of followers was selected. It was made a particular request that none of the sepoys might be brought.

Had nothing been said respecting the number of persons that were to proceed in the boats, it might have been supposed that the government had concluded that they had sent what they conceived to be ample accommodation for the whole. But they had already been put in possession of the fullest information on every subject regarding the mission; and a list of the number of persons

constituting it had been transmitted, together with other documents. They were therefore perfectly aware of our numbers. Had the mission, as fitted out from Bengal, appeared at court, it would have made an appearance both respectable and imposing; but this, it was very obvious to perceive, the court was desirous to avoid. Not only did they strenuously and firmly oppose every thing like a decent and respectable appearance in the mission, but they carried this conduct so far as to infringe even upon the personal comforts of the reduced number that were to proceed. It was evident that their object was to render the mission as obscure as possible, and to give it an indifferent reception. This was subsequently rendered the more conspicuous by their sending persons of mean condition to confer with Mr. Crawfurd on the subject of the letter to the king. The governor of Saigon, who had behaved in a polite and courtly manner toward us, had said, that on our arrival at Hué, the Mandarin of Elephants would transact business with the Agent to the Governor General; but this personage was contented to send his deputies for that purpose.

On the *24th*, about three p.m., the two barges sent from the capital came alongside. The mandarin who commanded them was the finest figure of a man we had yet seen since we entered the country. He was advanced in years, yet hale

and even athletic. He was, in fact, a perfect figure of an old soldier, inured to toil and accustomed to hardships. He proposed that we should sail towards evening, and stopped to dine with us. The Cochin Chinese make no difficulty of eating of whatever is placed before them: and both this man, who sat with us at table, and his followers, partook of almost every dish. They are, in fact, rather coarse feeders. When we came to examine the boats, we found the accommodation they afforded more wretched than we had anticipated. The boats, indeed, made up in length for what they wanted in breadth; they are fashioned like canoes, very narrow, but extremely long. They contained forty rowers each, and were provided with a few small brass swivels. The only accommodation left for us, was a narrow, close place, covered with a paltry bamboo matting, of a rounded form, one end of which was left open to creep in at. It was not sufficiently high to allow even of our sitting erect. We had, of course, concluded that the two boats were to be at our disposal, but to this arrangement the Mandarin strenuously objected, insisting on keeping the best accommodation for himself. When we came to take possession of our hut, we found it barely sufficient for two persons to squeeze into side by side in a recumbent posture.

CHAPTER IX.

VOYAGE FROM TURON BAY TO HUE'.—MOUTH OF THE RIVER OF HUE'.—POLITENESS OF THE COCHIN CHINESE HAS NOT TENDED TO AMELIORATE THE TREATMENT OF FEMALES.—ARRIVE AT HUE'.—PERPETUAL WATCH KEPT OVER THE MEMBERS OF THE MISSION.—MILITARY COSTUME.—THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S LETTER TO THE KING SENT TO THE MANDARIN OF ELEPHANTS.—THE CHINESE TRANSLATION ALTERED.—INTERVIEW WITH THE MANDARIN.—CANAL SURROUNDING THE CITY.—BEAUTIFUL PROSPECTS ON THE RIVER OF HUE'.—NEATNESS OF THE VILLAGES.—HORSES.—SOIL.—FORTIFIED CITY.—FRENCH MANDARINS.—CONFERENCE WITH THE MANDARIN OF ELEPHANTS.—DIFFICULTY RESPECTING AN AUDIENCE WITH THE KING.—AN ENTERTAINMENT SERVED.—FURTHER DISCUSSION.—THE AUDIENCE WITH THE KING REFUSED.—BEAUTY AND STRENGTH OF THE FORT.—INHOSPITALITY OF THE GOVERNMENT.—ROYAL BARRACKS.—ARTILLERY STORE-HOUSES.—ENORMOUS GUN.—CITADEL.—REMARKS ON THE FRENCH INTEREST AT COURT.—THE PRESENTS FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL AND AN AUDIENCE REFUSED.—POVERTY OF THE BAZAR.

COLLECTING together whatever seemed most essential during our excursion, we took possession of our boat about six p.m., and left the ship, which as on the former occasion, fired a salute. Neither the painter, nor any one likely to be of much use in procuring objects of natural history, was permitted to accompany me.

It was feared that, at this season of the year,

we should experience tempestuous weather, a prospect not altogether agreeable to us, considering that we were to go to sea in an open boat. The Mandarin comforted himself with the knowledge that the coast, though bold and rocky, abounded in excellent harbours, which he could at all times gain without much difficulty. Fortunately, however, the weather was agreeable during the whole of the passage, and though we obtained little aid from our sails from the time we left Turon Bay, we reached the mouth of the river of Hué, at three p.m. on the 25th, after a passage of twenty hours.

It was thought that the ship's long boat would have kept pace with the barges, but it turned out quite otherwise. She fell into the rear from the commencement, and did not reach Hué for a day and a night after our arrival.

From Turon to Hué, the country, as seen from the ocean, bears a similar appearance to that between the former place and Saigon. It is bold, rugged, and picturesque. The chain of mountains is continued; the ridges bear the same forms and direction. There can be little doubt but that they are of granitic structure. As you approach the river of Hué, they increase in altitude, and the peaks become more acuminated. Yet the aspect is, perhaps, more sterile. On the approach of morning, however, we were delighted

with the union of grandeur and beauty in the vast prospect before us. The dense white clouds yet rested tranquilly mid-way upon the mountains, whilst their bold summits were seen to project into the pure ether. The darker shade of the valley contrasted admirably with the lighter colour of a few scanty patches of cultivation. Industry laboured at the oar, and a multitude of small boats gave life and animation to the scene.

The nature of the soil was too evident, from the situation of numerous villages erected upon bare and sandy beaches. These had no vestige of cultivation or of vegetation in their neighbourhood. They depended solely for subsistence upon the fisheries; and upon the dry sands we often saw small boats drawn up to the number of several hundreds in the same place. On the left bank of the mouth of the river of Hué, there is constructed a small, but remarkably neat fort, with a rampart surrounded by a stone wall, and the guns mounted *en barbet.* This place commands the entrance into the river very completely, but does not appear capable of affording much resistance to a force capable of using artillery with advantage. The place is remarkably clean and neat. The walls were almost covered with soldiers, armed with muskets and lances. To man the walls of a fort is considered

by the Cochin Chinese complimentary, and to be equivalent to our custom of firing a salute as a mark of distinction.

A little way beyond the fort, the Mandarin brought the boats to anchor. Here we waited nearly six hours, and when towards evening we expressed a wish to take a short walk on shore, it was hinted that we must not go far. A number of people, soldiers and others, followed us. There was indeed nothing to be seen but a number of miserable huts built upon a barren and sandy beach.

The mouth of the river of Hué is rather narrow, considering the size of the river which here discharges itself. On one side it is confined by an elevated and extensive sand bank, which stretching along-shore, forms a boundary to an extensive sheet arm of the river, which seems to stretch towards the W. in search of an outlet. A less elevated sand bank, on which is erected the fort alluded to, confines it on the opposite side. At time of high water, there are, it is stated, sixteen and eighteen feet upon the bar. The entrance is formed by the sand banks mentioned, and is not more than two or three hundred yards in length. When you have passed this, you seem to have entered a vast fresh-water lake, and to be completely excluded from the sea.

The scenery becomes now very interesting. Islands, covered with cultivation, are visible at a distance; several vast rivers appear to pour their waters into one basin. Thousands of boats are seen returning from, or proceeding to sea. There were women in all the boats, and they seemed to have more than their due share of whatever labour was going forward. The superior politeness which we had remarked amongst these people has not ameliorated the condition of females in society.

Whilst we remained here, the Mandarin had sent to Hué to communicate our arrival, and to request orders. He was directed to wait the arrival of the ship's boat, and to send ours on towards the capital. About nine p.m., we again proceeded, and came to anchor about midnight. The distance we had traversed may have been about nine miles.

Sept. 26th.—At this place we remained till morning in our boat. There was no appearance whatever of a town, yet they declared that we were now close to it; few houses were visible. The bank was marshy, and overgrown with weeds; so that it was difficult to approach the land, but by the assistance of a narrow board. Several spears were stuck up against a hedge, within which, we were informed, stood the house the Mandarin of Elephants had allotted for our

reception. About seven p.m. a handsome boat came along-side, and soon after we were requested to land, and to take possession of our quarters, which we found ample and convenient. The place was everywhere surrounded by armed soldiers; but the only inconvenience we experienced arose from the number of persons who occupied the house with us, and who, by their incessant loud talking, left us not a moment's quiet by night or by day. They were spectators of all our actions, and never permitted themselves to lose sight of us, but occupied the rooms with us, as well when we were at meals, as at other times. We were instructed not to pass the sentries, but to remain within the house until we should be presented at court. Even our servants were watched with the strictest observation; and it was not without difficulty that they would grant permission to one of them at a time to go to the bazar close by, though accompanied by one of their own people. Nothing could exceed their strictness in this particular.

Compared with the troops of the native princes of India, and of the king of Siam, the soldiers we saw here made a very respectable appearance. Though exceedingly short in stature, they are well made, and of a robust form. They would appear to be well calculated to act as light troops; their dress is both convenient and

shewy. It would, perhaps, be difficult to devise one better adapted to the nature of the climate, the comfort of the soldier, and at the same time uniting that smartness of appearance so constantly aimed at in military costume.

The principal parts of the dress are as follow:

A conical helmet, without peak, made of basket work, lackered, and in general gilt: this is strong, but light, and perfectly water-proof. On the summit of this some wear a plume of red horse-hair and feathers; in others the plume is wanting. This helmet is worn over the common turban of the country, and bound by straps under the chin. In dry weather, and when the men are off duty, the helmet is thrown over their shoulder, suspended by the straps, in which state it resembles a small shield.

The body is covered with a loose jacket of red serge, or coarse red cloth, with a short, close collar; this habit is wide, has long sleeves, is fastened in front by loops and small buttons; it reaches down to the knee, and is slit on each side; it is turned up with blue or yellow; over this they wear one or two habits, according to the state of the weather; these are of yellow serge, the borders of various strongly-contrasted colours. In shape these exactly resemble the other habit, except that they have no sleeves. A pair of wide trowsers, scarce descending

below the knee, and made of coarse red or white silk, completes the dress. The arms, as has been already stated, are either a musket or spear. The greater number of the former appear to be of French manufacture. They are furnished with a bayonet like ours, but they are considerably lighter. They appear to take better care of their fire-arms than even European soldiers do. They always carry a cover for the lock, and, on the approach of rain, they carefully wrap up their muskets in a cloth cover. The accoutrements are similar to those of our own soldiers, but the leather of which they are made is ornamented with gilded figures. The cartouche-box is smaller than an English soldier's. I had the curiosity to look into one, and found the contents as follows:

A set of men for playing at chess;

A small bottle of scented oil;

A small horn, with pricker, containing apparently priming powder;

A bundle of small, hollow bamboos, each containing a charge of powder, stopped at one end with paper;

No ball, or shot.

To the outside of the cartridge-box is attached a bucket of basket-work, for the purpose of containing a couple of sticks, about six inches long, and an inch broad, a necessary part of the equipment of every soldier. A similar

bucket is attached to the shaft of the lance. It is by striking these sticks against each other that the sentinels give note of their watchfulness, and not by passing the word as with us. The noise is sufficiently loud and shrill. They beat three strokes every half hour, and it passes thus through the chain of sentries.

The lance is about twelve feet long. The shaft is of bamboo, admirably adapted for this purpose; the head about eight inches long. Two bundles of red horse-hair ornament the summit.

We had scarcely entered our lodging, when a messenger came from the Mandarin of Elephants to obtain the letter for the king, in order to its being examined previously to its being submitted to him. Mr. Crawfurd delivered the letter, together with Portuguese and Chinese translations, the latter executed by the missionaries at Serampore.

In the course of the day, the mandarin sent some trifling presents of rice, oil, salt, candles, &c., and a small sum of money, about fifteen or twenty dollars.

The Mandarin of Turon came to visit us in the evening, and conversed with us for several hours.

27th.—The clerk who came yesterday for the letter, now returned with the Chinese translation, stating, that there were certain expressions in it which rendered it unfit to be laid before the

king. Mr. Crawfurd had, on the previous day, told him that he would alter any expression that did not accord with the notions of propriety entertained by the court. What the objections now were, I am unable to say. Mr. Crawfurd mentioned one which was to this effect,—that the Governor General wrote as if he were writing to his equal. This man and several others, together with Mr. Crawfurd's Chinese interpreter, were all day occupied in making the required alterations.

28*th*.—The same personage returned with a request to have another copy of the Chinese translation. It was said that this was intended for the governor of Saigon; but, on visiting the Mandarin of Elephants, he told us that he meant to keep that copy by him. About noon, this copy was finished, and a messenger came to say, that the Mandarin of Elephants desired to have an interview with the Agent to the Governor-General. A comfortable and neat boat, rowed by soldiers, dressed in red, was sent to convey us. We set out at one o'clock, accompanied by some Cochin Chinese, who were usually waiting at our quarters. We were two hours in reaching the Mandarin's house, and the distance could not be less than six miles from our quarters. We were nearly at an equal distance from the town, though we had been told that we were quite

close to it. The river is so much divided by islands of various dimensions, and so intersects the country in every way, that it is difficult to state more of its course than the general direction which it takes, and this is, for the most part, from west to east. In ascending the river, to reach the Mandarin's, we soon quitted the branch which we first occupied, and turning to the right, entered a fine and wide canal, partly natural and partly artificial. This canal surrounds three sides of the capital, and at both extremities joins the great river, which lies in front of the fourth. The canal is about forty or fifty yards wide at its lowest part, where we entered; it becomes narrower as you ascend, and, at the upper extremity, it is little more than eighteen or twenty yards across. It is maintained in perfect order. The sides are regularly sloped, and supported by embankments, where requisite. Its depth would appear to be, in most parts, about eight feet. It affords the double advantage of an outward defence to the place, for which it was doubtless originally intended, as it bounds the glacis throughout its course, and is extremely serviceable, as affording water-conveyance to the various parts of an extensive city.

We had seen little more than the bare walls of our habitation since our arrival. The most beautiful and luxuriant scenery now burst upon

our view, and we were soon agreed that the banks of the river of Huê presented the most beautiful and interesting scenery of any river we had seen in Asia. Its beauties, however, are the gifts of nature more than of art. A vast expanse of water, conveyed by a magnificent river through a fertile valley, not so wide but that the eye can compass its several parts; ridges of lofty and bold mountains in the distance; the cocoa-nut, the areca, the banana; the sugar-cane, hedges of bamboos, that wave their elegant tops in the air; rows of that beautiful plant the hibiscus, are the principal materials which, grouped in various forms, delight the eye of the spectator. From this we must not separate the no less interesting prospect of numerous and apparently comfortable villages. In these the most remarkable circumstance is the neatness and cleanliness of the houses of the natives, and the cheerful, contented, and lively disposition of the people. The houses of the better sort are substantial and large, covered with tiles, the walls being partly made of brick and mortar, and partly of wood. Besides, they exercise considerable taste in adorning their grounds and little gardens with flowers and ornamental trees.

Though we were in the immediate vicinity of a large city, few people were to be seen; these

were at work in the fields, collecting weeds from the canal, or passing on the public roads. We were still more surprised to find so few boats upon the river, and of junks we saw no more than three or four. It is true, that the commercial season had gone by, yet a large city must have great and constant demand for transport, at least by means of boats. Besides, the former remark was alike applicable to Saigon, yet at that place vast numbers of boats were constantly visible. It is difficult to conceive how so much solitude should exist under such circumstances. Of those who were passing on the roads, some were mounted on small ponies, active, but neither handsome nor strong. There are no horses in the country, and it is only the lower orders that ride these; nor have we seen them used for any other purpose.

In our excursions, we observed a considerable extent of the landscape: on the right bank, which is at no great distance from the hills, it is diversified into low and high ground, and often rises into hills of moderate size, the sides of which are cultivated. The general extent of cultivation is but limited, and the quantity of ground fit for the production of rice very small; and wherever this is the case, countries in these latitudes must be considered as poor. Nor can this place, therefore, be exempted. It is in-

debted to Saigon and Tonquin for the supplies of rice. Considerable diversity of soil exists here; in some parts it is a dry, friable, and almost pure sand; in others, it consists of stiff clay, and elsewhere these are intermixed. The alluvion which this great river has formed is extremely small.

As soon as we had entered the canal, we found ourselves in front of one face of the Fort. The term Fort, which has been applied to this place, is apt to convey erroneous notions, though it is perhaps as much a fort as a place of such vast extent can well be. It is, in fact, a fortified city; and if the French had compared it with such places as Delhi and Agra, instead of Fort William, the comparison had been more just. The fortifications of this place are, without question, of a most extraordinary nature, whether considered in the magnitude of extent, the boldness of design, the perseverance in execution, or the strength they display. The Fort appears to be built with the greatest regularity, and according to the principles of European fortification. It is of quadrangular form; each side appeared to us to be at least a mile and a half in length. The rampart is about thirty feet high, and cased with brick and mortar. The bastions project but little, contain from five to eight embrasures, and are placed at a great distance from each

other. The walls are in excellent order. We could not distinctly see whether there was a ditch at the foot of the wall, but were told that there is. The glacis extends to the canal, and is about 200 yards in breadth. In many parts, it is rather higher on the banks of the canal than towards the Fort, but is everywhere commanded by the latter. Numerous sheds for boats, and for other purposes, are erected on the glacis.

An enemy on the opposite side of the canal would, in many parts, find shelter in the brushwood and hedges, and even villages, within reach of the guns of the Fort, and thence would find the means of attacking the place with little exposure of his men. But it is not to be expected that such places are capable of much resistance. They may serve as a temporary defence against a sudden alarm, and against a tumultuary attack from irregular troops; but a handful of brave and enterprising men would soon possess themselves of the place.

The gates are ornamented in the Chinese style, but the approaches are calculated for the purposes of defence. Within the walls is contained a square building, surrounded by lofty walls, and apparently very strong. This is probably the citadel. We had but a very imperfect view of it.

There appeared no reason to doubt that we were brought by this circuitous route, in order that we might see the extent of the fortifications.

On leaving the canal, we entered the great river. At the point of their junction, the view is uncommonly fine; the body of water very great, the country opposite beautiful and much diversified. The ground here would appear to be adapted chiefly for the cultivation of sugar-cane, Indian corn, vegetables, and such seeds as are adapted to a dry soil. We passed the houses of several persons of rank; they were surrounded with stone walls and bamboo hedges. The roads in front were good. After we had proceeded about a mile on the great river, we came to the house of the Mandarin of Elephants. We waited for a few minutes in our boat, when we were told to land. As we approached the house, we met the two French mandarins, Messrs. Vannier and Chaigneaux, who entered the house along with us. They were dressed in silk robes, according to the Cochin-Chinese fashion. They are both of them fine-looking old men, of an amiable expression of countenance. The former had served in the American war, and appeared to be about sixty-five years of age; the latter is somewhat younger. They both left France on the breaking out of the Revolution, and devoted themselves to the service of the late King of

Cochin China, who raised them to their present rank. They were the companions of the King in his misfortunes as well as in his prosperity: of twenty Frenchmen who were in his service, they are the only survivors.

In the court of the mandarin's house was a crowd of vagrant-looking people, some dressed in masks, some with painted faces, and hideous looks. I was informed by M. Chaigneaux that these were players, and that a Chinese comedy was now performing; and that this and the other festivities were going forward in consequence of the marriage of the mandarin's son, who had just carried home his bride, a lady of high rank. The music, which was harsh, shrill, and disagreeable, ceased as we entered. The mandarin was seated upon a small table or bench, covered with a carpet and furnished with handsome cushions, at one end of a large, plain, and neat, but rather naked room, open on two sides. Behind him were the apartments of the women, separated only by a curtain; they were spectators of the play, and continued here during the whole time we were present.

On the opposite side of the hall were also suites of apartments, now occupied by the players, who made their appearance from that quarter. To the right and left, were disposed a crowd of people in three or four rows. They

consisted of men, women, and children, and many of them appeared to be miserably poor. Few or no soldiers were present, but one or two attendants bore swords. We walked up to where the mandarin sat, and bowed to him. Without quitting his seat, he returned our salute, and pointed to a couch on his left, where we seated ourselves; the French mandarins sat in chairs on each side of us. The conversation which ensued was carried on in French, on our part, and partly in Portuguese, the French mandarins being the medium of communication in the former, and a native Christian in the latter.

When we were seated, the chief asked if there was any thing else to be communicated than what was contained in the letter to the King. Mr. Crawfurd replied, that the letter contained almost every thing that was to be said; but that he had a few words to state on commercial matters, which he would now, or at any time the mandarin thought most proper, enter upon. The mandarin desired that he might now enter upon whatever he had to propose.

Mr. Crawfurd then said, that what was chiefly required was that permission might be granted to British ships to trade to the ports of Cochin China, mentioning in particular Saigon, Turon-bay, and Tonquin; and that instructions might be delivered to him respecting the duties demanded, and

the regulations by which the commerce of these places was conducted. To this the mandarin answered, that the ports of Cochin China were open to all nations, that the duties had of late been very considerably diminished, first by the late King, and latterly by the present; that he would furnish a table or scheme of the duties collected at different ports; that he would always expedite the affairs of traders, by immediate attention to them, well knowing the importance of expedition in matters of that nature.

Mr. Crawfurd said, that this being the case, there was nothing for him to ask, and that the regulations were very liberal. The mandarin now observed, that the matter being so very simple, our affairs would soon be settled; that until they were so it was not usual for strangers to appear in public; but that being done we had merely to signify to him when we wished to go abroad, and that he would send a boat for us and people to conduct us. He farther observed, that he would send the tariff, and an answer to all matters to-morrow.

Whilst this conversation was going forward, in a loose and somewhat desultory manner, M. Chaigneaux brought forward the affair of the damaged muskets sent from Madras by Messrs. Abbot and Maitland. The mandarin was well acquainted with the circumstance, and it was

very evident that it was now agitated with no good intention.

Mr. Crawfurd now took occasion to ask the mandarin when he might expect to have the honour of obtaining an audience of the king. We were but little prepared for the answer to this: that the business of the envoy being entirely of a commercial nature, it altogether precluded the possibility of his being admitted into the presence of the king; and that it was an affair for the cognizance of his ministers. To this Mr. Crawfurd answered, that it was right that commercial affairs should be conducted by the king's ministers, and that he should be happy to have the honour of conferring with them on this subject, but that commerce was not the sole object either of the letter to the king or of the mission; that he had been sent from a distant country, by a powerful and mighty government, to congratulate the king of Cochin China on his succession to the throne. That this was of itself to be considered as an honourable distinction of the king of Cochin China; and that the obvious and general tendency of the mission was to unite and to cement the bonds of friendship between the two nations. That the determination not to receive the envoy of the Governor General of India, a man of the most exalted rank, the intimate friend of his sovereign, looked up to by

all the world, and holding correspondence with the greatest kings of the east, was the more surprising, and indeed altogether unaccountable, for that the late king had received the envoy of the Governor General, and had given him two public audiences. He concluded by requesting, that the Mandarin would represent this matter to his majesty, and obtain from him an early answer. The mandarin answered that he had already communicated with the king upon the subject, and such was his determination. That had the Agent to the Governor General come on any other than commercial affairs, he would have been presented to the court, but that it was altogether contrary to its customs to give audience on such occasions. That had Mr. Crawfurd been the envoy of the king of England, or of any king, he would have been received. That in this case it was as if the governor of Saigon had sent an envoy to the imperial court. It was contrary to usage, contrary to the customs of the country, and could not be done; but for the satisfaction of Mr. Crawfurd the matter should be again represented to the king.

In the interval, tea had been served, and, at this part of the conversation, the table was covered with roast pigs, geese, fowls, and fruit. The subject of the damaged guns was again introduced by M. Chaigneaux.

We were requested to sit down to dinner. The mandarin continued upon his seat, a tranquil spectator of what was going on around him. The meat was served up on China dishes, and the fruit on japanned trays. A few small liqueur glasses, of coarse manufacture, were placed upon the table, together with a bottle of common French claret. The knives were also French, with gilt handles.

After we had partaken of a little fruit, the things were removed, and the chief asked if we had a desire to see the comedy. Mr. Crawfurd said that he should wish first to say a few words on the subject of the late conversation. The Portuguese interpreter was now requested to explain that it must be well known to the mandarin, and to the court at large, as it was also to the two French gentlemen now present, that in the year 1804, the envoy of the Governor General of Bengal, Mr. Roberts, who was sent in a capacity similar to that of Mr. Crawfurd, had been received honourably at court, and had obtained two audiences of the king; that therefore this was a clear and unequivocal proof that it was not contrary to the usage of the court, that he should be received by the king; that the envoys of the Governor General were received with distinction at the courts of the first monarchs of India, and that very lately he had obtained an

audience of a neighbouring monarch, that of Siam. He concluded by begging that the matter might be taken into serious consideration.

The Mandarin stoutly asserted and reiterated his assertion that Mr. Roberts had not obtained an audience of the king. He was reminded that documents proving the contrary, written by the express order of the king, were in the possession of the government of Bengal, and that both Messrs. Vannier and Chaigneaux, who were present on that occasion, could now testify to the fact. M. Chaigneaux stoutly denied that he knew any thing of the matter, said that he was sick, and absent. M. Vannier neither could nor did deny the matter, but remained silent. The Mandarin knew that nothing but the truth had been stated; yet he equivocated in the most palpable manner; saying at one time that he had not been admitted; at another, that it was during war, when any one might have been admitted to the king; and that since that time the customs of the court had been altered; and that the magnificence of the court was reserved solely for the greatest occasions. It was here observed that the change which had taken place in court etiquette was not known; and that with respect to the manner in which the mission was to be received, it was for the king to decide whether the audience should be public or private. On this the old gentleman

dryly observed, that it was indeed very natural that we should use every expedient to gain an audience of the king, having come so far for that purpose, and plainly insinuated that it was all to no purpose. The coolness of his manner, and the direct inference of the remark, were too much for us, and we could contain our gravity no longer. The Frenchmen seemed equally surprised with the Mandarin at seeing us laugh so heartily. The old gentleman was in fact quite at a loss what to say; and at last dwelt upon the argument that the etiquette of the court had been changed. He promised to return an answer to all matters on the following day.

The players were now introduced. Their performance was so grotesque and ridiculous, unmeaning and tiresome, that it is not worthy of further observation. The music also was abominable. We were soon tired of both, and requested permission to retire. The French gentlemen accompanied us to our boats.

We returned home by a different route from that by which we came, so as to make the circuit of the fortress, but it was now dark, and we could see but little.

Sept. 29th.—No answer came from the Mandarin regarding the subjects agitated yesterday. He sent to say that a boat would be sent to take us to see the place; and in the evening the

French gentlemen came to accompany us. Proceeding up the river, we passed along that part of the fortress which the darkness had prevented us from seeing on the preceding evening. This part of the wall has been finished, in the course of the present year, in a very complete manner. The present king, however, is not altogether pleased, as his predecessor was, with the principles of Vauban. He has accordingly built the embrasures on a plan of his own* invention. The order of them is quite reversed, that is, they are narrow towards the ditch, and wide towards the rampart! This is the case with all the embrasures on this side of the fort, and they would seem to be the only objectionable part of the work. We were now more struck than ever with the great beauty, magnitude, regularity and strength of this extraordinary work, for such it is in every point of view. Nothing can be more neat and regular than all the works, the glacis, the covered way, the ditch, the walls, and the ramparts. Some of the bridges are made of stone and mortar, others of wood, supported on blocks of masonry, and all of them remarkably neat.

When we had passed nearly mid-way along this front, we entered the place by a principal

* This mode of constructing embrasures had been long before strenuously recommended by some military writers.

gate, neatly and strongly built in the European style, and with simple and few ornaments. The glacis is covered with short grass, and about 200 yards in breadth. The wet ditch is about thirty feet broad, supported on each side by masonry, and being on a level with the river, it always contains water. The wall cannot, I should think, be less than from twenty to thirty feet high. The French gentlemen told us that the length of each side was 1,187 toises of six feet each, and that the walls would contain 800 pieces of cannon. On entering the gate we turned to the right, and passed along the rampart. As much care has been bestowed on the construction of the interior as of the exterior. The place is laid out in squares or quadrangles, the roads are wide and convenient, and a navigable canal, which leads to the granaries and magazines, passes through the place. The town, if so it may be called, is rather paltry; the greater part of the ground appears to be laid out in ill-cultivated gardens, attached to miserable, but probably only temporary, huts. The bazars have an appearance of poverty, yet the regularity of the streets gives an air of great neatness to the place, and the view both of the country and town, as seen from the rampart, must be considered very fine. After passing for more than a mile along the rampart, we were conducted to the public granaries, con-

sisting of a vast number of well-built, substantial store-houses. The greatest attention has been bestowed upon every thing; and the powder-magazines are erected in the midst of tanks.

We were, however, unfortunate in the day we had chosen. It now commenced to rain with great violence, and the crowd of idle spectators who had inoffensively followed us so far, began to disperse. We next passed on towards the palace and the citadel. I could not help reflecting on the different reception we had experienced at Saigon, and at this place. There the people were anxious to shew us every attention, and their hospitality was unbounded. Here we passed in front of a palace, where there were numerous officers and persons of rank that saw us, yet though we were on foot, without umbrellas, without the means of conveyance, overtaken by the rain and drenched with wet, there was no offer of assistance made from any quarter. It is easy to conceive what appearance we made under these circumstances.

The palace of the king is surrounded on every side by handsome and well-built rows of barracks. These were uncommonly clean and very complete in their structure. The arm-racks, the arms of the men, the platforms on which they sleep; the apartments for officers, were all disposed with the greatest neatness and regularity.

The men though not armed, were disposed with regularity in the verandahs; and all of them in uniform. Of some regiments the uniform is blue, with red sleeves; of others, white with red, and so forth. The officers are distinguished by a circular patch of embroidery in front of each shoulder. These barracks would lose little in comparison with the best we have in England.

When we had passed through several suites of these, we were proceeding on towards our boats, being unwilling to continue longer in the wet. The commander of artillery wished, however, to shew us his department, and sent to recal us. His department was indeed well worth seeing. We had not seen one gun on the walls of the fort, but here was a display calculated to surprise us. It were an endless task to enumerate all the different sorts of iron and brass guns, their sizes, and other circumstances connected with them. Four very large buildings, or sheds, were entirely filled with guns mounted and dismounted, of every description. There were also a considerable number of mortars, and an ample supply of shot and shells. A great number of very fine brass guns were pointed out to us that had been cast by the late king, and among them nine of immense size. The officer of artillery observed that the latter were too large to be serviceable in war, but that the king had intended

them as a memorial both of himself and of the works executed during his reign. They were mounted upon carriages, finished with as much care as the guns themselves. The gun-carriages in general were uncommonly well finished, and made of a hard and durable wood called Sao, procured chiefly from the province of Dong-nai or Saigon.

The palace of the king is so completely surrounded by the barracks, that except on passing one or two of the gates, we could see nothing whatever of the buildings. The citadel is a small quadrangular building, with strong and lofty walls, close to the palace. It is altogether an edifice not calculated to excite any peculiar interest.

It had now become so dark that we could see nothing more of the buildings, and therefore returned to our boat. What we had seen was well calculated to give us very favourable notions of the capacity of the Cochin Chinese. Every thing was in a style of neatness, magnitude, and perfection, compared to which, similar undertakings by other Asiatics were like the works of children. These wear the semblance of the preparations of a bold, enterprising, and warlike people. Such were the sentiments which a view of these objects was calculated to produce. A more extensive acquaintance with the people

tended to qualify them. It was already easy to perceive that the master-mind which had projected and created such great works no longer influenced their continuance. He had set that in motion which his successors, it may be suspected, are scarce equal to carry on or to preserve. Above all, it was easy to perceive that the genius which had directed every thing was French. The late king shewed, doubtless, a great and unprejudiced mind in following their plans. But another Pharaoh has arisen who knows not * Joseph. The French interest, there seems every reason to believe, declines daily, and with the two Mandarins of that nation, one of whom is about to return to his native country, it will probably cease altogether. The proposals made by the French court since the peace, and their at-

* Possibly we may be allowed to doubt the validity of our author's opinion on this point; it may be that the monarch of Cochin China in 1822, had heard of the drama of Constantine Phaulkon, M. Chaumont, and the Jesuits, which was acted by command of His Majesty the French king in 1688, at Bankok and Louvo.

For an account of the extraordinary alliance projected between the kings of France and Cochin China, and which was disconcerted only by the breaking out of the French revolution, see the historical sketch in Barrow's Cochin China from p. 250 throughout. The political importance attaching to such a connexion is incalculable; every one must in this agree with the opinion of Mr. Barrow, that "it is difficult to say what the consequences of such a treaty might have been to our possessions in India, and to the trade of the East India Company with China; but it is sufficiently evident that it had for its object the destruction of both."

tempts to enter into a more close union, have been kept a profound secret. Whatever may have been their nature, it is clear that they have been rejected by the Cochin Chinese. China, and not France, is the example which the present court follows in every thing. No Frenchmen have been received into its service since the death of the late king; and though we have reason to believe that the councils of the two, now in office, have not been favourable to the interests of the mission, it is alike evident that they were totally incapable of influencing the court in favour of the proposals of their own countrymen. When they saw that we were surprised and disappointed at the determination of the court to refuse an audience to the envoy of the Governor General of India, they insinuated indirectly that there were others who had also been refused; and subsequently told us more plainly that we ought to be the less concerned at this refusal, for that M. Cargariau, Captain of the French frigate Sybil, bearing letters and presents from the French minister of marine, had been refused an audience of the king in 1817. It was to little purpose that we told the Frenchmen that the cases were by no means parallel; like the Mandarin of Strangers they always dwelt as a *dernier resort* upon the change of court etiquette that had taken place.

With this manifest decline of French interests and councils, it remains to be proved, whether without such influence, the Cochin Chinese are capable of maintaining that spirit which has raised their country to its present rank, and advanced it beyond the condition of its neighbours.

1*st Oct.*—We went to visit M. Chaigneaux, but not finding him at home, we proceeded towards the principal bazar accompanied by his nephew, an intelligent young man. We had seen but a small part of the bazar, when a petty officer informed Mr. Crawfurd that we must have an order from the Mandarin of Strangers,—on which we turned back. The bazar was well supplied with the more coarse and common articles of Chinese, but afforded very little of domestic, manufacture.

Soon after our return home, the assistant to the Mandarin of Strangers, the same old man that had come to take the letter for the king, came from the former to say that as the English had not yet had any commerce with the country, and could not therefore have gained any advantages, his majesty could not think of accepting the presents; but that if the English should return another year, he would then accept whatever was agreeable to him, paying for the same, in money, or in produce; that with respect to the

ceremony of being presented at court, it was necessary to have all the mandarins in their robes, and all the court in their full dresses; that this was a great ceremony, reserved for the envoys of kings; that had Mr. Crawfurd come from the king of England, he would have been presented, but that in the present case it was as if the governor of Saigon sent an envoy to a monarch.

He added further that the tariff should be sent, and that the English should be permitted to trade to all the ports of Cochin China and Tonquin, on paying the established duties. He advised that the ship's long boat should be sent back without delay, for that the bad season might otherwise prevent her altogether from returning; that we ourselves might proceed either by sea or by land to Turon bay.

This was probably the most favourable, and perhaps the only, opportunity for making a representation on the subject of the presentation. Such representation might, it is possible, though in my opinion not at all likely, have produced some delay or alteration in the commercial concerns, and this was doubtless Mr. Crawfurd's reason for expressing his satisfaction at the arrangements that had been made. There remained, in fact, nothing to be asked on the subject of commerce; so that they had made no concessions, no sacrifices whatever on that account.

They would receive our ships as they did those of the Chinese, the French, the Dutch, the Americans. Where we had no favour to ask, no boon to solicit, we might, it seems to me, have urged what is due to a great government, and has been accorded by other nations of India, with the greater warmth.

Before this man had left us, Messrs. Vannier and Chaigneaux came to visit us. They had been sent by the king to explain what had been said by the assistant to the Mandarin of Strangers. Their communication was to the same effect as that of the other. It was on this occasion that they mentioned that M. Cargariau had not seen the king.

October 3.—After passing the morning with M. Chaigneaux, we visited the principal bazar. It consists of a spacious street about a mile in length, with shops on either side the whole of its length. Many of the shops are mere paltry huts, made of palm-leaves; the rest are more substantial houses, constructed chiefly of wood, and have tiled or thatched roofs. Here, also, the poverty of the shops was particularly striking. A very large proportion contained nothing but shreds of gilt and coloured paper used in religious ceremonies, and at funerals. Chinese porcelain, of a coarse description; fans, lacquered boxes, Chinese fans, silks, and crapes, the two

latter in small quantity; medicines without number, coarse clothes made up, large hats made of palm-leaf, and a sort of jacket of the same material; rice, pulse, and fruit; sago, made from the seeds of a species of nymphæa, were the common articles exposed for sale. There were but few, and those very coarse articles of manufactured iron, as nails, hatchets, and chisels, which bore a high price.

The Cochin Chinese carry purses, in which they put their betel and tobacco; these are very neat, and usually thrown over the shoulders of the men; they are made either of plain blue silk, or embroidered in gold, and may be had at all prices, from half a dollar to fifteen. Men of rank have them carried by their servants. In this bazar the shops are held almost entirely by natives of the country. There are scarcely any Chinese amongst them.

CHAPTER X.

Physiological Exterior of the Cochin Chinese.—Costume.—Moral Character.—Religion.—Brutalizing Effects of a Despotic Government.—Military Servitude.—Population.—Rains and Inundations.—Costume of the Rainy Season.—Visit to the Tacoon.—Tablets and Boxes ornamented with the Mya Shell.—Letter and Presents for the Governor General.—The Agent declines accepting the Presents for the Governor General.—Regulations respecting Trade.—Extent of Permission retracted.—A Repast.—Rotten Eggs and Chickens in the Shell a Chinese Delicacy, and Token of Royal Favour.—The Mandarin of Han.—Letter to the Governor General refused.—Pitiful Spirit of the Cochin Chinese Government.—Chinese Player.—The King of the Drama Bambooed.—Final Interview with the Mandarin of Strangers.—Return to Turon.—Beautiful Country.—Canal.—Salt-water Lake.—Grand Scenery.—Route.—Botanical Observations.—Palanquins and Bearers.—Granitic Country.—Excellent Roads.—Re-embark.

We had by this time seen a large proportion of the people, and our intercourse with them had brought to light traits of moral character, which, under a less intimate acquaintance, had lain concealed; while at the same time we gained a more intimate knowledge of their physical form. It is extraordinary how little diver-

sity there exists in the latter, in regard either of stature or of features.

In their physical exterior, they present a compound which accords not very correctly with any of the tribes whose peculiarities we have before attempted to describe. In some respects, indeed, the resemblance is sufficiently obvious; yet in others it is much less so, if not rather of an opposite character. It appears to me, however, that a strict analysis of the aggregate in their physical form, will lead to the conclusion that this nation also has sprung from the Tartar race, and that it constitutes a variety of that great and widely-disseminated branch of mankind.

In point of stature, the Cochin Chinese are, perhaps, of all the various tribes that belong to this race, the most diminutive. We remark that they want the transverse breadth of face of the Malays; the cylindrical form of the cranium, as well as the protuberant and expanded coronoid process of the lower jaw of the Siamese, and the oblique eyes of the Chinese. In common with all of these, they have a scanty, grisly, straggling beard; coarse, lank, black hair; small dark eyes; a yellowish complexion; a squat, square form; and stout extremities.

I shall here, however, enter more at large into the description of this variety. It is no very

difficult task, at least for an attentive observer, to seize upon those points in the form of the Cochin Chinese, which serve to distinguish them both from the neighbouring and other nations. It is more difficult to convey, in accurate and precise terms, correct notions of these distinctions to others. The subject of the filiation of nations, though one of the deepest interest, is still involved in much obscurity. We see impressed upon the whole of the human race, through every variety, every modification of climate, under every condition of barbarous or of civilized life, one general, one universal form, from which there is, in fact, no deviation. It is true, that there are tribes so different from others in appearance, that we almost conclude that they constitute different species of animal beings. Yet the difference is, perhaps, in all cases, more apparent than real, more imaginative than natural. When we would inquire into the origin, the history, the connexions, of a particular tribe, or the prevalence of a particular form or feature, we are often compelled to confess that we are at a loss to discover characters in all respects satisfactory. The interest of the subject will always claim for it the patient investigation of reflecting men, and will in time, doubtless, remove many of the difficulties in which it is at present involved.

To return to the subject of the Cochin Chinese. In the consideration of their external form, the circumstance which chiefly strikes an European observer is their diminished form. Their squat and broad shape augments the effect of this characteristic, so that they appear more diminutive than they actually are. Of twenty-one persons, taken chiefly from the class of soldiers, the others being citizens, the average height was five feet, two inches, and three-fourths: of eleven of the same persons, the average length of the arm amounted to 12.4 inches: of the fore-arm, 10.15 inches, and the girth of the chest at the broadest part, to two feet, nine inches. It has been remarked, that the Cochin Chinese are of a yellowish colour. It is very rare to find amongst them any that are very black. Many of the females in particular are as fair as the generality of the inhabitants of the south of Europe.

The globular form of the cranium, and the orbicular shape of the face are peculiarly characteristic of the Cochin Chinese. The head projects more backwards than in the Siamese; it is smaller and more symmetrical, in regard to the body, than in the tribes already noticed, and the transverse diameters both of the occiput and sinciput are very nearly equal. The forehead is

short and small, the cheeks round, the lower part of the face broad. The whole countenance is in fact very nearly round, and this is more particularly striking in women, who are reckoned beautiful in proportion as they approach this form of face. The eyes are small, dark, and round. They want the tumid, incumbent eye-lid of the Chinese, and hence they derive a sprightliness of aspect unknown to the latter. The nose is small, but well formed. The mouth is remarkably large, the lips are prominent but not thick. The beard is remarkably scanty, yet they cultivate it with the greatest care. There are amongst them those who can number scarce one dozen of hairs upon the chin, or on the whole of the lower jaw. That on the upper lip is somewhat more abundant. The neck is for the most part short. Before quitting this part of the subject, I may remark that there is in the form of the head a degree of beauty, and in the expression of the countenance a degree of harmony, sprightliness, intelligence, and good-humour, which we should look for in vain either in the Chinese or Siamese.

The shape of the body and limbs in the Cochin Chinese, differs but little from that of the tribes already noticed. The chest is short, large, and well expanded; the loins broad; the

upper extremities are long, but well formed; the lower are short, and remarkably stout. There is this remarkable difference from the others of the same race, that here the tendency to obesity is of rare occurrence. The limbs, though large, are not swollen with fat. The muscular system is large and well developed, and the leg in particular is almost always large and well formed. The Cochin Chinese, though a laughing, are not a fat, people.

The costume of the Cochin Chinese may be described in a few words. The subject is more deserving of attention, in that it also presents them to us in a peculiar light different from that under which their neighbours appear. Though living not only in a mild, but warm climate, the partiality for dress is universal. There is no one, however mean, but is clothed at least from the head to the knee; and if their dress is not always of the smartest, it is owing more to their poverty than to their want of taste. Nor is it comfort or convenience alone that they study. They are not above the vanity of valuing themselves on the smartness of their dress, a failing which often leads them into extravagance. You will often see a well-dressed man without a single *quhan* in his possession.

The principal and most expensive article in

their dress is the turban. That of the men is made of black crape, of the women of blue. On occasions of mourning, it is made of white crape.

A loose jacket, somewhat resembling a large shirt, but with wide sleeves, reaching nearly to the knee, and buttoning on the right side, constitutes the principal covering of the body. Two of these, the under one of white silk, are generally worn, and they increase the number according to their circumstances and the state of the weather. Women wear a dress but little different from this, though lighter, and both wear a pair of wide pantaloons, of various colours. The dress of the poorer class is made of coarse cotton, but this is not very common, coarse silks being more in vogue. Those of China and Tonquin are worn by the more opulent classes. Shoes also are worn only by the wealthy, and are of Chinese manufacture, clogs, in fact, rather than shoes.

After this account of the physical exterior of the Cochin Chinese, I shall add a few words respecting their moral character. Any account of a matter so intricate, must, on so short an acquaintance, be necessarily imperfect. The subject, in its different bearings, is besides so extensive, that I can at most but hint at a few points.

Of these the most important and most remark-

able is religion. The nation may, in fact, be said to be without any religion whatever. They have neither religious instruction nor instructors, priests, nor any body of men, whose function is to encourage its cultivation, or by their conduct to set an example to the great body of the people. Every man is free to act in this matter as he thinks fit. The better sort affect to follow the precepts of Confucius. The theism of the Chinese is as cold-hearted and unaccompanied by feeling, as it is crude, undefined, and uncertain in its principles. It appears to have no effect whatever on their conduct, nor do they entertain any intelligible notions on the subject. It would appear to be fashionable to profess it; but they neither talk of it, nor have any means of knowing what fashion perhaps alone induces them to profess.

The human mind, under every condition of life, has formed to itself certain notions of a future state. The untutored mind, led away by its fears, soon becomes involved in the intricate mazes of superstition, in which the mind too often paints undefined, unreal terrors. Such is the case with the Cochin Chinese, whose religion, if it is ever thought of, consists in the ceremony of placing on a rude altar some bits of meat and a few straws covered with the dust of scented wood, or in scattering to the winds a few

scraps of paper covered with gold foil; or in sticking a piece of writing on a post or door, or to a tree. You inquire in vain for the motives of such acts. The objects of their fear are as numerous as they are hideous. One form of superstition is observed by sea-faring people, another by those who live upon the coast, and a different form by those inhabiting agricultural districts.

Thus, if not absolutely without religion, the Cochin Chinese can scarcely be said to derive moral feeling from this source. It may, perhaps, with truth be observed, that it is better that a people should have no religion than a false one. The nation in question will furnish an argument in favour of this opinion. It might be supposed that the first, the necessary consequence of the want of religion, would be a total disregard of right and wrong: this, however, is not the case, for in many respects the Cochin Chinese are superior to their neighbours, who are devoted to their national religion. If they are destitute of that aid which is derived from true religion, they are likewise free from the degrading trammels of a false one. A more direct engine than that of religion itself, has modified, if not formed, the moral character of the people; it is that of an avaricious, illiberal, and despotic government, the effect of which, so sedulously pursued through a course of ages, it is melancholy and revolting

to human nature to contemplate. It has involved the whole body of the people in perpetual and insurmountable poverty; it has debased the mind; it has destroyed every generous feeling; it has crushed in the bud the early aspirations of genius; it has cast a blasting influence over every attempt at improvement. Such being the character of the government, it will not appear surprising that the moral character of the people should in many respects be brutalized. What is defective in their character has been occasioned by perpetual slavery and oppression; yet notwithstanding all this, they display traits of moral feeling, ingenuity, and acuteness, which, under a liberal government, would seem capable of raising them to an elevated rank amongst nations. But they are perpetually reminded of the slavery under which they exist; the bamboo is perpetually at work, and every petty, paltry officer, every wretch who can claim precedence over another, is at liberty to inflict lashes on those under him. But the tameness with which they submit to this degrading discipline, alike applicable to the people as to the military, is the most extraordinary circumstance. Their obedience is unlimited, nor do they, by word or by action, manifest the slightest resistance to the arbitrary decisions of their tyrants. It will not appear surprising that this system should render them

cunning, timid, deceitful, and regardless of truth; that it should make them conceited, impudent, clamorous, assuming, and tyrannical, where they imagine they can be so with impunity. Their clamorous boldness is easily seen through, and the least opposition or firmness reduces them to the meanest degree of submission and fawning.

Such are the more revolting traits in their character: they are in a great measure counterbalanced by a large share of others that are of a more amiable stamp. They are mild, gentle, and inoffensive in their character, beyond most nations. Though addicted to theft, the crime of murder is almost unknown amongst them. To strangers, they are affable, kind, and attentive; and in their conduct they display a degree of genuine politeness and urbanity quite unknown to the bulk of the people in other parts of India *. They are besides lively and good-hu-

* In their persons, the Cochin Chinese are far from being a cleanly people. Many of their customs are, in fact, extremely disgusting. Those ablutions so much practised by all the Western Asiatics, are here unknown; and their dress is not once washed from the time it is first put on, till it is no longer fit for use.

There appears but little ground for an opinion commonly entertained of this people, that they are dissolute, and that female virtue is held in little repute. The conduct of both sexes in public is altogether correct and decorous. The frailties of married women are said to be looked upon by all ranks with the greatest indignation and abhorrence, while the punishment awarded by the laws amounts to the greatest, and even to revolting, severity. With

moured, playful, and obliging. Towards each other, their conduct is mild and unassuming, but the omission of accustomed forms or ceremonies, the commission of the slightest fault, imaginary or real, is followed by immediate punishment. The bamboo is the universal antidote against all their failings. Like the Chinese, this nation is addicted to the worship of ancestors, and reveres the memory of relations. This may, in fact, be considered as the only trait of religion that exists amongst them. Whatever may have been its origin, whether, like most institutions of a similar nature, it has degenerated into a set and formal ceremony that touches not the heart, we ought perhaps to consider it as of an amiable nature. The political aim of the institution, the only one of the kind in which the government takes a part, inculcating it strongly upon the minds of the people, is not be overlooked. It is

respect to unmarried women, the greatest liberty is conceded in matters of this sort, nor does even public opinion oppose the smallest obstacle to the freest indulgence of their inclinations. The utmost degree of liberty is conceded to them, and the connexions they form with their male acquaintances, whether temporary or durable, whatever consequence may follow, is in no manner prejudicial to the woman's future prospects, nor is she the less respected by her future husband. The lesser chiefs make no scruple in giving their daughters, for a sum of money, to any one who is to reside for a short time in the country. Indeed, there seems to be little other ceremony in matrimonial treaties than that of giving.

that of preventing its subjects from going abroad, and thereby contributing to retain them in a state of ignorance and slavery.

The Cochin Chinese are more industrious than we should be apt to suspect, considering the oppressive nature of the government. Where the government interferes but little, as in the fisheries on the coast, their industry is indeed very conspicuous, and there seems every reason to believe that, were they freed from oppression, they would be equally so in other branches. They are capable of supporting a large share of fatigue; and the quantum of daily labour, as for instance in the operation of rowing, or of running, is in general very considerable. But the greatest obstacle to the developement of industry proceeds from the oppressive nature of the military system, by which about two-thirds of the male population are compelled to serve as soldiers, at a low and inadequate rate of pay. Of all the grievances they labour under, it would appear that they consider this the most oppressive. It not only takes from agriculture and other occupations, the hands necessary for such labours, but by the idle habits which the military service generates in the men, it renders them unfit to return to that condition of life. The consequence of this system may easily be con-

jectured, though not perhaps to the full extent. Almost all kinds of labour are performed by women, whom it is not unusual to see guiding the plough and sowing the seed. Besides, the labour of women is paid at an equal rate with that of the men. The daily wages for either is one mas and their food, or two mas, without it. Another great evil arising out of the military system of levy, consists in the destruction of family connexions and ties. From the age of seventeen to twenty, a selection of the youth is made for military service, from which there is no retiring until age or infirmity has rendered them incapable of further service. It is true that, from time to time, they are allowed to return to their homes on leave of absence; but it is to be feared that a temporary residence of this nature affords a feeble barrier to the unsocial tendency of the system.

But in order to form correct notions of the effect of the military system, we ought to know precisely the proportion taken out of a certain number of the people. This proportion, however, has been so differently stated by different persons, that it is extremely difficult to assume any degree of probability on the subject. It has been stated that usually two-thirds of the male population from twenty to fifty are taken. It

should be observed that the French gentlemen state that, in general, one-third of the soldiers are on leave of absence.

The answers to our inquiries respecting the population of the country, or of any particular town or district, have been attended with the same degree of uncertainty, and therefore I have for the most part passed the subject over in silence. It has rarely happened that we have had an opportunity of conversing with persons sufficiently enlightened to possess correct notions on this subject; and it seems very doubtful if any exact data, calculated to provide an accurate estimate of the amount, are in the possession even of the government. The French gentlemen, speaking from conjecture, estimated the population of the kingdom at 10,000,000. French writers have estimated it at three times that amount. It is agreed by all that Tonquin is more populous than Cochin China. The gold and silver mines alone of that country give employment to no less than 10,000 industrious Chinamen, with their families.

Oct. 12th.—The Tacoon, or Mandarin of Strangers, sent to say, that the letter for the Governor General of Bengal, and the papers relating to commercial affairs were in readiness, and that he wished to deliver them. A boat was sent for us at an early hour, and we set out for the Tacoon's

house immediately after breakfast. We were several hours in reaching the place, on account of the rapidity of the current. From the 5th instant, with but one or two days of intermission, it had rained almost constantly, and in such quantity, that the rains we had experienced near to the line, in Siam and in Bengal, where they are periodical, seemed insignificant compared with these. The waters poured down in drenching torrents, frequently for two days and nights without intermission. They were accompanied with but little lightning. For the most part a strong wind from the north-east prevailed. The barometer which, previous to this change in the weather, had scarcely indicated any perceptible variation, even in its ordinary diurnal tide, being almost constantly at 29.8, or from that to 29.85, now gradually fell to 29.635, at which it continued stationary during the rain. The thermometer at the same time scarcely varied from 77.5°.

The country was speedily deluged with water, and in a short time the rooms we occupied were scarce an inch above the level of the inundation, it having already overflowed the other parts of the house. Our neighbours in the same street were in still worse plight, the water having already entered their houses. The people were now seen moving about the streets in boats, where but the day before they had passed on dry

ground. The lower orders make use of a dress well calculated to defend the body against injury from wet; and in no country perhaps is such a dress more required. It is made of palm-leaves closely sewed together, and reminds you, by its appearance, of the Siberian dressed in shaggy skins. It consists of a hat, in the shape of a basket, that comes down over the shoulders, and is from two and a-half to three feet or more in diameter. It is bound under the chin. The body is covered by a round jacket without sleeves. The hat and jacket are impervious to water. There were few to be seen abroad at this time who were not dressed in these useful, but rude habiliments. From these they derive so much protection, that the rain apparently occasions but little interruption to their occupations.

When we arrived at the Tacoon's house we found the two French mandarins in their boats, and ready to enter with us. The Tacoon was seated as before, and dressed in plain robes of blue silk. Behind him was suspended, against the wall, a board on which were written some Chinese characters; the letters were executed in mother-of-pearl, and from the manner in which the light was reflected from their surface, appeared as if they were embossed in the richest style. The workmanship was of extreme beauty;

the chief seeing that it attracted my attention, took care to inform us that he had caused it to be made in his own house. We had already seen some very elegant boxes inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Some of them displayed a correctness of taste, and a degree of beauty which we had but little expected. They were not to be compared with what we now saw. These boxes are only to be procured from the chiefs. The best of them are said to come from Tonquin, and the shell, an extremely thin, translucent, and elegant species of Mya, is brought from the mouth of the river of Saigon. If the Japan boxes are more elegant, these are the most durable. The colours never change, and the varnish is excellent.

On this occasion there were but few people in attendance at the house of the Tacoon. He received us as on the former occasion, without quitting his seat, and we took our places at a table opposite to him, upon a form covered with carpets, and opposite to four mandarins, who were seated at the table with us.

It seemed as if the old man were pleased at having brought the affairs of the mission to a favourable conclusion. He was in high spirits, talked and laughed much and very heartily, and evidently wished to impress us with notions favourable to himself and his countrymen. He

commenced the conversation, by observing that whatever might be the custom in Europe, it was quite contrary to their notions of propriety to open a letter intended for the king, and that the letter from the Governor General of Bengal to the king of Cochin China had been opened at Saigon. It was explained to him that this was done, contrary to the inclination and to the great inconvenience of the Agent of the Governer General, by the governor of Saigon, who insisted upon seeing the original letter. It was added that the governor of Saigon had received us in a very friendly manner, and that his motive in wishing to see the letter seemed to arise from some doubts that he probably entertained respecting the real objects of the mission. No further notice was taken of the matter.

Some papers were lying before him on the table. He observed that these were copies of the letter to the Governor General, and of the commercial regulations; that correct copies should be delivered to the Agent of the Governor General, but that it was their custom carefully to seal up and enclose in a box the original letters, which were to be delivered in that state to the Governor General.

The papers were now delivered to be read. The letter for the Governor General was not in the name of the King, but from the Tacoon him-

self; the general import was as follows: that Mr. Crawfurd had brought a letter for the king, which, being in the English language, they could not understand; but that having a Chinese interpreter with him, they understood through the latter that the object of the letter was to obtain for the English commercial intercourse with Cochin China; that Mr. Crawfurd had offered, on the part of the Governor General, 500 muskets and two chandeliers. The English should be permitted to trade on the same conditions as the Chinese, Portuguese, and French nations. The King sent as a present to the Governor General, a few catties of cinnamon of the first quality, some of inferior quality, some agila wood, two rhinoceros' horns, elephants' teeth, and a few peculs of sugar-candy. The Agent of the Governor General had been presented with some agila wood, two elephants' teeth, and the horn of a rhinoceros. Such was the subject of the letter.

Mr. Crawfurd now expressed his satisfaction at the hospitality and kind treatment we had experienced since our arrival, as well as with the manner in which the objects of the mission had been conducted; that he had no doubt, the more the two nations were acquainted with each other, the better friends they would become; that he should accept of the presents which the King

had been pleased to offer to him, with all becoming respect, and consider them as an honourable mark of personal distinction; that with regard to the presents intended for the Governor General, the mandarins must well know that things of this sort were by no means necessary to ensure the friendship of powers so well disposed towards each other; that he hoped, therefore, the King would not take it amiss if he declined receiving them; that he would, however, do what might be considered equivalent, he would go, as proposed at first, to the hall of ceremonies to view them, and that he would report to the Governor General that such things had been offered.

It seems as if the mandarins had been prepared to receive an answer of this nature, and the French gentlemen observed that they had stated it as their opinion that the presents for the Governor General would not be received. The mandarin, in a good-humoured way, used every argument that he could think of to induce Mr. Crawfurd to accept them; but being assured repeatedly that this could not be done without an express order to that effect, he desisted, and the matter seemed amicably, if not satisfactorily, adjusted on both sides. The Tacoon said that the letters should be delivered on the following day, and that at an early hour a

boat should be sent to convey us to the hall of ceremonies, in the palace, where the presents would be laid out for inspection. He had asked, on our entrance, whether we wished to return by sea or by land; and on its being answered by land, he said that it was not at present very practicable to go by sea; and that he would give us his boat to convey us the first stage of our journey, which it would be more agreeable to accomplish by water, the navigation being inland. Palanquins and bearers should be provided to convey us the rest of the way. Satisfied with this arrangement, we fixed our departure for the morning of the 14th. He observed, that a certain number of bullocks, hogs, goats, ducks, fowls, rice, and sugar, would be offered for the use of the ship, and conveyed to Turon.

Mr. Crawfurd answered that he would accept them with pleasure, and again expressed his satisfaction at the liberality of the commercial regulations. During the time we remained here, the Mandarin had sent his assistant to communicate respecting the commercial regulations. It was agreed that the English should be permitted to trade to all the ports of Cochin China; and that their ships should be measured in the manner that the Chinese junks were. The Mandarin now observed that permission had been granted to trade to the ports of Saigon, Han, (Bay of Turon,)

and Hué. This is, in fact, restricting it to the two former; the difficulties attending the entrance of the latter, impeded by a shallow bar at its mouth, and exposed to a wide and open sea, rendering the permission almost of no avail. He observed that Tonquin being a lately conquered country, the King had thought proper to restrict the trade in the manner mentioned.

From the readiness with which leave had in the first instance been granted to trade to all the ports in the kingdom, and from the surprise which that communication excited in our very obliging friends, but very certainly also our political enemies, the French gentlemen, when the matter was mentioned to them incidentally by Mr. Crawfurd, there appeared reason to suspect that the restrictions now made were of their counselling. Mr. Crawfurd expressed his assent to these restrictions.

Whilst the latter part of the conversation was going forward, preparations were making for a repast. The table was soon covered with sweetmeats, jellies, roasted ducks and fowls, and a great variety of fruits, of which we were requested to partake. The Mandarin now laid aside the distant and formal manner which he had hitherto observed, and, approaching the table, conversed with much familiarity, laughing as before very loudly at times. Four or five

young children had collected round him. He observed that these were part of thirty-six children who were now alive and in his house, and that the entire number of whom he had been the parent was fifty-four. He said that he was now sixty-six years of age, that he had served three kings, and had filled the office he now holds for the last twenty-one years, and that he expected to have more children born to him. All his children had been born, he said, since the late king had ascended the throne. Previous to that period, being engaged in war, flying from place to place, pursuing or pursued, he had found how unfavourable such a life is to the increase of families, but that he hoped he had profited by the quiet which followed.

The mandarins opposite to us seemed to relish the repast. They devoured rather than ate of it, and, with an avidity and coarseness of manner which was altogether disgusting. Fat pork and rotten eggs they seemed to consider as delectable morsels, and were not sparing of their powers of consumption. It will appear scarcely credible to an European, that both here and in many parts of China, fresh eggs are looked upon with indifference, while those that have become to a certain degree putrid are much esteemed, and that the latter cost in the market thirty per cent. more than the former.

Eggs that contain young ones are still more highly esteemed, and, amongst the numerous dishes sent to us by the king, were two plates full of hatched eggs, containing young that were already fledged. We were assured that this was considered as a mark of great distinction. Doubting still of the fact, we sent them to the soldiers appointed as our guard, who gobbled them up in haste with the most luxurious voracity.

The table was now cleared, and the conversation that followed was of a general nature; when, to our great astonishment, the little mandarin of Han, a man who had often visited us both here and on board ship, without giving us any more favourable notion of his capacity than that of his being a poor silly creature, with scarcely two ideas in his head, got up, and, in a loud and sharp voice, exclaimed, that we had come from the Governor of a province, that we had offered presents to a great king, who, not receiving them, we were now returning without the presents he had deigned to offer. Had the little man done that justice to the bottle, which he did to the fat pork and hatched eggs, one might have supposed this intemperate remark to have proceeded from inebriety. It would appear, however, to have been the result of pure folly, for on this, though not on all the occasions we had seen him, he was apparently sober. Before

he had time to proceed further, Mr. Crawfurd replied, that he had not called for the opinion of this mandarin, and would hear no more from him. That the matter having been fully discussed with the Tacoon, in their presence, it was now surely at rest. The little mandarin evidently felt this as a keen rebuke. Mistaking the nature of the part which I had performed in the transactions of the day, and conceiving himself to be on terms of great intimacy with Mr. Crawfurd, he thought that such an observation could only have come from me. So, rising again, with still more animated energy, he observed, that there was but one name in the Governor General's letter, meaning thereby, that but one had a right to speak there. He said nothing further, and sat down, apparently much offended; the more so for that I could not help laughing at his mistake. The Tacoon also laughed very heartily at the occurrence. The observation however, though seemingly thrown out by accident, made some impression upon the two mandarins, senior to that of Han; and the Tacoon, seeing that it was likely to lead to further discussion, terminated the affair by saying, that he would refer the matter to the king. Thus, by one unlucky, unnecessary expression of a weak and foolish man, were our plans entirely frustrated.

The conversation on our part was carried on

entirely in the French language, M. Chaigneaux acting as interpreter between us.

Oct. 15*th.*—Two of the assistants to Tuan-kam, (Mandarin of Elephants,) who had been present at our last interview with him, called upon Mr. Crawfurd with a sealed copy of the Commercial Regulations. They said, that the letter for the Governor General could not be delivered unless the presents were accepted; that those intended for Mr. Crawfurd and the ship should be delivered at Turon. They asked if Mr. Crawfurd really wished to have the letter; and that if he would accept of the presents for the Governor General, it would be made out without delay. Mr. Crawfurd replied, that he had already delivered his sentiments on the subject of the presents, and that as to the letter, it was for the king to decide whether he should receive it or not. They inquired when we wished to depart, and were told, on the day after to-morrow. They said that we might visit the Tuan-kam on the following day, which was agreed to. They now took their leave, apparently disappointed at the result of the interview. It appeared that they thought Mr. Crawfurd could not return to Bengal without an answer to the letter to the king.

16*th.*—We visited the Mandarin of Strangers. He had sent a clerk early in the morning, to say

that four men only would be provided for carrying the baggage of Mr. Crawfurd, myself, a European clerk, an interpreter, and servant. We had been requested to state the day before, in writing, the number of persons that would be required for this purpose, and had mentioned twelve. We were now not a little surprised to learn that they had reduced this number to four, and not conceiving that such an order could have been authorized by the minister, sent the man away.

Since the affair of the presents had been last agitated, a marked change had taken place in the conduct of those about Court towards us. They descended to acts of petty meanness which were altogether contemptible, and much more calculated to excite contempt, derision, and pity, than any hostile feeling. It was but too evident that the King was piqued at the refusal of the presents, and we had every reason to believe that the mean conduct which his ministers now observed was authorized by him. On this occasion we were landed at some distance from the minister's house, purposely, as it would seem, in order that we might have to walk some way in the sun, and over bad roads. In the court of the minister's house there was, as usual, a crowd of idle people, interspersed with players. The Chinese play would seem to be a favourite

amusement with the old man, for we found always a band of players in attendance. The performance ceased as we entered the court. We had here a good proof in what esteem the heroes of the buskin are held. Not all their gibes and jokes are sufficient to raise them above the discipline of the bamboo. The Richard of the piece, the Kean of the party, was at this moment prostrate on the ground, with two men holding him down, and a stout fellow inflicting blows upon a tender part with all his might. The scene was inconceivably ridiculous. The gay, gilded casque of the hero, contrasted with his rueful and lengthened countenance, so abundantly expressive of the pain he suffered; the gay flowing robes of flowered satin which formed his dress; his large Tartar boots, &c., and the serious manner of those who held him in this state, were altogether irresistibly laughable.

The Tuan Kayn received us on this occasion with even less ceremony than formerly. He was dressed in a plain flannel or cloth jacket, of a green colour, and a black turban, without any ornament whatever. Bare and naked wooden benches were given us to sit on; the carpets, with which they and two old chairs had formerly been covered, being now removed. There was no one present but the chief himself, and a

number of his retainers, who had apparently assembled to witness the play.

The conversation was carried on through Mr Crawfurd's Chinese interpreter.

The mandarin observed, that as the presents had not been accepted, the king had thought proper to countermand the letter to the Governor General; but that the supplies for the ship's use should be delivered at Turon. Mr. Crawfurd mentioned the subject of the people for our baggage; he observed that this had been done by the express order of the king himself, and that the order could not be reversed without much delay. He seemed as if conscious of there being some degree of meanness attached to this affair, for immediately thereafter he observed that it was no arrangement of his, and that he had nothing to do with it. He said that if English vessels came to trade, he would do all in his power to assist them, and to expedite their business. Mr. Crawfurd said, that as they were so anxious about the matter of the presents, he would take them on board, but he could not answer for their being received by our Government, and that he must protest against receiving them in the name of the Governor General. He replied, that it was better that matters should now rest as they were. This interview lasted

about half an hour. The old gentleman wished us a favourable passage to Bengal, and we bade him adieu. On our way back we called upon the French mandarins, and took leave of them. They had behaved towards us, during our stay, with undeviating kindness, politeness, and attention, and to them we are indebted for many acts of civility. In whatever light they may have regarded the mission from Bengal, and it is but natural that they should have considered it as hostile to the interests of their country, they never allowed political feeling to influence their conduct with regard to us; and on those occasions in which they acted as interpreters, they appeared, as far as I am capable of judging, to have done justice to the opinions of Mr. Crawfurd. If they have in any way influenced the conduct of the Court, it has not been in this particular.

On our return home, we engaged men to carry our baggage, and prepared to depart on the following day. Our business being now over, we had nothing further to detain us. The whole country was still inundated, and the rain still fell in great quantity.

Oct. 17th.—Two boats were in readiness about nine a. m. to take us the first part of the journey by water; they were in charge of the old man who had conveyed us from Turon. One of the boats,

though a very long vessel, offered but little accommodation, and was intended for our baggage. We had been informed by the Tuan Kayn that he would send his own boat for our accommodation. We were surprised to find it already occupied by the old skipper. He was told that the boat had been sent expressly for us, and that he must either leave it, or that we should. He argued and refused to move into his own boat for some time, but seeing us get up to go into it, he complied immediately. A third boat, containing a military guard armed with spears, joined us. We had ever since our arrival been guarded with the utmost strictness, and the system had not yet ceased.

We proceeded up the river until we had passed the citadel a short way, when we entered a fine canal on the left, and pursued its course almost directly east, for the distance of eight or nine miles. The weather had cleared up, and we had a fine day. We were much pleased with the great beauty of the country, and the variety of its scenery. The low hills opposite to the Fort were here and there cultivated with upland-rice, and presented a beautiful appearance. The extensive plain on either side of the canal was overflown; numerous villages were seen to line its distant boundaries. This canal is said to have been constructed by the father o the reigning king; it is about twenty

yards in breadth, and almost quite straight. Its banks are inhabited for about two miles towards the river, and occasionally are seen some large and well constructed houses, surrounded by walls. It is altogether a work of great labour, and of no less utility, as besides the advantage of water-conveyance to a very considerable extent, it has enabled the cultivator to turn into rice-fields extensive plains which formerly lay waste through the want of irrigation. The soil taken from the canal has been used chiefly for the manufacture of bricks, of which an immense number has been used in the construction of magazines, and of the walls of the fort.

We had travelled about eight miles, when the canal terminated in a marsh, but its banks were still to be traced by thick tufts of coarse grass, and numerous species of Sparganium, and of Carex, interspersed with a few shrubs, as Melastoma and Pandanus. At the distance of four miles farther, we came to the banks of a salt-water lake, in which the canal terminates. At this place there resides a petty chief, to whom it was necessary to shew our passport. A sluice separates the salt from the fresh water, and prevents the former from entering the rice fields. We stopped here only for a few minutes, when we passed with impetuosity through the sluice into the salt-water lake, the water of the canal

being at this time elevated considerably above that of the latter.* We had now before us a vast and beautiful expanse of water, surrounded by a bold and picturesque country, uniting within itself the sublime and imposing beauties of alpine and temperate countries, with those peculiar to the torrid zone. This is more correctly a bay than a lake; the counterpart, and superior even in extent, as it certainly is in beauty, to the bay of Turon. In other respects, however, it is not to be compared with that excellent harbour, for though completely shut in by the land, and surrounded by mountains that afford shelter against every wind, the entrance from the sea is narrow, and there is said to be but two fathoms of water in the deeper parts. For boats it affords complete protection at all times; and a considerable number were now passing in various directions. Numerous villages were to be seen at the foot of the hills, where there is in most parts room for cultivation, to a small extent, both of rice and of other grains.

In two hours we crossed the lake, and passing through a narrow canal for the distance of two or three hundred yards, came to a neat and populous village, surrounded on all sides by hedges of bamboo, so as to be completely concealed. The soil here is rich, and affords excellent crops of rice. We were directed to a large and com-

modious house, built for the accommodation of travellers. Some of the lower orders of the people were already at the place, and immediately procured fire, water, and whatever assistance was required of them, but no person of rank, or of authority, nor even the mandarin who conducted the boats, came near us. The people in attendance instantly complied with whatever orders our interpreters conveyed to them. Three interpreters had accompanied us from the capital, of whom two spoke Chinese, and one, a native Christian, Portuguese.

In the hall, or principal room, a number of platforms of various heights were disposed for sleeping on. We were told not to occupy the highest, for that the king slept on when he passed this way.

The people of the village soon collected round us in crowds in the room we occupied. Mere curiosity had brought them to see us, and though they were noisy, they did not attempt to touch any thing.

The necessary preparations were made by the interpreters to enable us to depart early next morning. Our palanquins were produced, and bearers were furnished from the village.

We were surprised to see so few animals in this day's journey, the country appearing favourable to the existence of several kinds. A large

species of black Fulica was almost the only bird we observed in the marshes.

18*th*.—We commenced our journey in palanquins, and reached the next stage in four hours, the distance appearing to be about ten or eleven miles. From the village to the foot of the hills, there is a distance of nearly three miles, through a well-cultivated and fertile, as well as beautiful, country. Though in the vicinity of the sea-shore, we observed no cocoa-nut trees. Areca nuts, plantains, sweet potatoes, betel leaf and tobacco, were the produce of the village gardens, as rice was of the fields that surround them.

We found the palanquins that had been provided for us, well adapted to the nature of the country, and at the same time both comfortable and easy. They consist simply of a netting of cotton thread, in shape like a sailor's hammock, stretched at both ends by a stick, and suspended from a slightly-curved pole or bamboo. The top is formed of palm leaves, neatly laid over each other, and covered on the outside with a durable, black varnish, which renders it waterproof. The sides are furnished with water-proof curtains, which are let down or taken up according to circumstances. The whole is extremely light; the position in which the body is placed in this vehicle, is more agreeable and less fatiguing than in the more costly and shewy pa-

lanquins of Bengal, which require two men to carry them when empty, while in this two men are able to carry the stoutest person, nor are more than this number to be seen at any time under the pole. The Cochin Chinese, though short, are remarkably stout and well made. They travel under the palanquin faster than the Bengal bearers do, and make no stop until they reach the end of their journey. We were told that two was the usual number of bearers furnished for a palanquin.

They were furnished to us in greater numbers, for at some stages four were provided, and at others six; yet there were never more than two carrying at the same time. It was matter of surprise to us to see with what facility and quickness they ascended and descended very steep hills, leaping from stone to stone with the utmost certainty of footing. Being from ill health unable to leave the palanquin, I was at first somewhat alarmed at the boldness with which they proceeded, but soon saw that my fears were groundless. They were always cheerful under the greatest exertions they had to make, and when on one occasion, where the road was exceedingly steep, I made an attempt to walk, I had not proceeded above a few yards when they came round me, and would let me journey no further in this way. The kind dis-

position of these poor people was further exhibited by their attention in plucking flowers and fruits as we travelled.

The first hill that we ascended appeared to be about 800 feet high and very steep. From this we descended into an extensive plain, partly cultivated at the base of the mountains, but the greater part marshy, with a sandy soil, and overgrown with underwood. We found the village in which we halted, like the former, neat, clean, and comfortable. The houses erected for the accommodation of travellers are so much alike, that I need say no more than has been said of the last.

We changed bearers at this place, and after three hours' stay recommenced our journey. We had again a very considerable hill to ascend, but our bearers made very light work of it. When we had gained the summit, a magnificent view opened before us. We looked down upon another of those extensive lakes, or inland bays, which we have already described. Descending the mountain, we passed along its left bank, through a sandy soil, till we came to the junction of the lake with the sea, by means of a narrow and shallow neck. Here, also, there is a village, but a poor one, the inhabitants of which appear to live almost entirely by fishing.

It will readily be conceived that the rugged

country we were now passing through affords but little ground capable of cultivation, and that the population must therefore be necessarily very scanty. What there is draws its maintenance more from the sea than from the land, and every bay swarms with boats. The hills present the usual luxuriance which vegetation assumes in other intertropical countries. Here, however, it may be added, is exhibited a greater variety in the products, though the general aspect of the vegetation is much the same. The country here is throughout granitic, and presents the usual rugged and bold appearance of all such countries. The roads, considering the nature of the country, are excellent, and seem to have been constructed with much labour.

19*th*.—We crossed the narrow neck of water at this place, and commenced the highest and steepest ascent we had yet attempted. The road lay over masses of granite, and was extremely rugged; yet the bearers advanced with the greatest facility over ground which might have appeared impracticable to a less hardy people.

We soon gained sight of the bay of Turon from a great elevation. About noon we reached the village below, on the shore of the bay; and, after a hasty breakfast, embarked for the ship in one of the boats of the natives.

Oct. 20*th*.—On our return, we had the happi-

ness to find our friends and all on board in good health. For notwithstanding the politeness and good humour of our friends the Cochin Chinese, we had already begun to wish ourselves once more in the society of our countrymen. The party on board had, during our absence at the capital, amused themselves chiefly in making excursions to the various hills that surround the bay. These excursions procured us fewer zoological additions than we might reasonably have expected. Great numbers of a large species of Simia, with a blackish face, red cheeks, arms and thighs, gray upon the body, and furnished with a long tail, were seen in the woods.

END OF THE JOURNAL.

ERRATUM.

p. 48, l. 18, *for* those, *read* that.

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LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES,
Northumberland Court.